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The Regiment of the Pouertie.

Compiled by a learned diuine of our time *D. Andreas Hyperius*. **And now seruing** very fitly for the present state of this realme.

Translated into Englishe by H. T. *minister.*

DEVT. XV.

Omnino indigens & mendicus non erit inter vos.

There shall vtterly bee no begger among you.

PSALM XLI.

Beatus vir qui prospicit egeno, & pauperi. &c.

Blessed is hee that prouideth for the poore and the needie. &c.

¶ Imprinted at London by F. Coldock, and H. Bynneman.

ANNO. M.D. LXXII.

1137

To the right reuerende father in God, Edmunde L. Bishop of Rochester, high Almner to the Queenes *maestie*, *Henry Tripp* wisheth prosperous succesſe of his labors in Gods Churche.

IF the partiall affection of *Philautia*, or ſelfe loue, and the vnſatiable deſyre or appetite of our own priuat cõmoditie vver once rooted out of mens mindes, and the cõtrary perſuaſion ſettled, to vvit, that it is as vnlauful to liue as to our ſelues, not profiting our brethren, as it is to ſeeke our cõmoditie by an other mans hinderance: me thinks I ſee (right reuerend father) what a cheerful shevv and countenaunce of all things, vvhat mutual loue in mãs ſocietie, vvhat ſecuritie and quietneſſe to the common vvelth ſhuld therby enſue. Sure I am, that neither *Plato*, *Ariſtotle* &c. nor any other that haue trauailed moſt to bring the politique gouernmẽt to perfection, vvere euer able to deſcribe or paint out ſuch a liuelike patterne of a common vvealth as this one errour once reformed, wold reſtore vnto vs. *Eraſmus* in *Encomio Moriæ*, pla

ceth *Philautia* firſt amongſt the traine of fooliſh ladies, vvho doth hold eche mans eyes in a prepoſterous admiration of himſelfe: yea and that in the vievv oftentimes of the vvorſt parte euen of the bodie, vvhile he curiouſly ſeketh to ſerue the delicacie, and to ſupport the frayltie of the ſame, to decke, pamper, and cherish it.

But I vvould to God vve did ſo conſider and vevv our ovvn bodies, that vve might lern ther by, & the better cõceiue vvhat belõgeth to the cõmon vvealth or the churche of God: vvherof the one by the Philoſophers: the other by the Apoſtle is compared to a bodie, vvherein (as in eache of our bodies) *ſymetria & ſympathia, id eſt*, due proportion and right placing of eche member, in reſpect of the vvhole bodie, and a mutual paſſion or ſenſe of feeling diffuſed thorovv euery part, muſt be preſerued. For vvhether ſoeuer of theſe tvvo ſhall happẽ to be empaired or diſturbed, forthvvith ther folovveth eyther griefe, or a deformitie, or vtter confuſion to the vvhole bodie: as vvitneſſeth the Apoſtle. Rom. 12. 1. Cor. 12. &c. For this cauſe alſo the Apoſtle Romans. 14 ſayeth: *Nullus noſtrum ſibi ipſi viuit*, None of vs liueth to himſelfe &c. The vvhiche *Plato*, and the *Stoickes* did affirme, vvhoſe aſſertions are cited by M. C. *Officiorum. 1. Non nobis ſolum nati ſumus. &c.*

VVe

VVe are not borne only to our ſelues, but ſome parte of our birth our countrey doth chalenge ſome parte our parentes, ſome parte our friendes. (VVhat coulde haue ben ſayd more fully, if he had among theſe reckened the Churche of God? Item: Theſe things vvhich the earth doth bring foorth, are all created for mannes vſe, but man was made for mannes cauſe, that they among themſelues might profite one an other. (O that he had added here alſo, that all shoulde ioyntlye ſeeke Gods glorie:) Againe he ſayth: Herein we muſt followe nature as a guide, and bring to light that which may ſerue for the weale publique, by enterchangeable duties, by giuing and receiuing, and bothe by our artes, trauail & faculties, to knit the felowship of menne one with an other. As often as this aſſertion of the Philoſophers or doctrine of the Apoſtle is effectually conſydered of good and godlie natures, it is apparant with what cheerefulueſſe they endeuour to imploye what ſo euer giftes, or bleſſyngs, (*corporis, fortunæ, aut animi,*) GOD hath endued them vvith, to the benefite of Gods churche, their countrey, and brethren. And truely I am perſuaded, and I ſuppoſe alſo that all men vvill yelde no leſſe) that this only care hathe ſo often aſſembled all the vvyſeſt counſellours and

chiefe magiſtrates from al parts of this realme vnto one high courte of parliamente, there by good aduiſe prouidently to decree and enact, vvhatſouer mighte bee deemed auaylable for reformation of enormities, or the eſtablishing of good orders in the cõmon vvealth. Many of theſe and proſperous parliaments haue ben aſſembled within the happie reign of the Queenes maieſtie: but none of them all, beleeue me, hath eyther ben begonne or ended with better ſucceſſe thã this laſt ſeſſion holdẽ at VVeſtminſter the eight of May, in the. xiiij. yeare of the reigne of our moſte gracious ſoueraigne Lady E. &c. Of vvhich it may truly be ſayd, if euer it might be ſayd of any, that it was holdẽ to the highe pleaſure of almightie god, and the weale publike of this realm. Among the procedings of vvhich parliament, that, before al things, cannot but be approued bothe by god and godly men, which is conteined Chap. 5. entituled: *An act for the punishment of vacabundes, and for the releefe of the poore and impotent.* In vvhich acte the whole matter of the Pouertie, as ſerueth beſt for the ſtate of this realm, is ſo charitably, vviſely, and prouidently decreed and enacted, that nothing can in ſo fevve vvordes bee more pithily defined, I ſay in ſo fevv wordes: for as it ſeemeth, bicauſe ſo vvaightie and laborſome a buſi-

a buſineſſe coulde not fully be diſcuſſed vvithout a greate many more vvoordes, therefore the chiefeſt pointes of that buſineſſe, are onely expreſſed in that acte, wherby a vvay is prepared to the Magiſtrates and Iuſtices of the peace, to vvhoſe good diſcretion the other lighter circumſtances are committed. And I praye vnto God, that euery of them vvithin their circuites and limittes, may carefully, diligently, and cheerefully performe and execute not only that vvhich is expreſly conteyned in the ſayd act, but alſo vvhatſoeuer may ſeme expedient for the places vvhere they dvvel, as far forth as shall be not repugnant or contrary to the godly and charitable meaning of the ſayd act, I vvish alſo moſt earneſtly that eche faithfull ſubiect may ſo account and iudge of thoſe proceedings, that not only ther be no murmuring or grudgig, but alſo that ech one in his calling, may endeuor to further them, that a proſperous & luckie effect may enſue thereof.
The which care and charge, vvhen I acknowledged to apperteyne of duetie in ſundry reſpectes vnto my ſelfe alſo, and that bothe the church of God and the common vvelth might of good right chalenge and exact of me the vttermoſt that I am able to do for their benefit, I thought I vvoulde rather offer it vvillingly,

and of mine ovvne accord in ſeaſon, than defer til it vvere after a ſort craued of me, or ſome other by extreme neceſſitie. *Gratia enim (ab officio quod mora tardat abeſt*, For dutie whiche is ſlacked is not thankvvorthie. Therfore I vvold not conceale that thing vvhich I thought moſte auaylable to the accõplishing of the happie ſucceſſe intended in that acte, but haue ſet forth in our vulgar tong, the whole regimẽt and gouern ment of the Pouertie, vvritten in the latin tong by a great lerned doctour of Theologie of our time, *D. Andreas Hyperius*, no leſſe wiſely & orderly, than learnedly and charitably. A vvorke very neceſſary for the magiſtrate, and profitable for the ſubiect: and as it may ſerue to direct the one in adminiſtring of the ſaid act, ſo wil it teache the other to think vvel of the procedings. VVhich maner of regiment if any do think vnpoſſible to be executed, in ſuch ſort as this godlie mã hath preſcribed, they are much deceiued. For vvhy may it not (if vve vvil be circumſpect, diligent and vvilling) as vvel be brought to perfection in this realme, as in any other. Nay why may it not as vvel be generally folowed in al parishes, townes, & cities vvithin this realme, as it is in one town corporate, vvhich I vvil for their commendation name: euen the tovvne of *Newarke* ſituate vppon the riuer of *Trent*, in the countie

countie of Notingham, I leaue it to be farther enquired of. Great prouiſion and a large collection is alſo made for the poore in this citie of London, but yet belike ther lacketh ſome peece of this good regiment. For beggers and diſeaſed people, do both vvalke and lie in the ſtretes and other vnmeete places, vvhich thing is both lothſom and lamentable. A redreſſe may eaſily be accomplished by the order of this booke being aſſyſted by the authoritie of the ſaydo acte.

Novv, to the ende (Right reuerend father) that this treatiſe of that learned diuine mighte be the better accepted of our countrey men, I thought it good to aſſygne your Lordshippe to be his patrone. For to vvhome coulde I more ſafely committe this learned laboure of his, thā vnto one, vvhiche both loueth, and is himſelfe ſingularly learned? To vvhome might I better commēd ſo vvorthy a miniſter of gods church, than to a godly Byshoppe? VVho doth better deſerue the dedicatiō of this booke, thā he that hath deſerued to be high Almener to ſo liberal a prince? Yea vvho is better able both to defende this treatiſe,& to further the poore mens cauſe, than he vvhoſe eloquence hath aduaunced him to ſo high dignities, and vvho for his good affection tovvardes the poore is placed

in the chiefe office appertayning to that busi-
nesse? These and infinite other such respects
haue moued me to offer vnto your Lordship
this my trauaile, in translating this godly trea-
tise, the vvhiche if it may be accepted of your
Lordship, and vvorke the effect vvhich I vvish
it may among all good citizens, I haue the re-
compence vvhiche I desyre: and shal be en-
couraged hereafter, to bring to lighte
the more vvillingly my priuate
labours to the benefite of
the cõmon vvealth.

Your most humble orator

HENRY TRIPP.

The greatest faults escaped in printing.

Fol. 2 pag. 1. lin. 15. φυπτοχιας, rede φιλοπτωχιας.
Fol. 36. pag. 2 lin 11. 2. Thessa. 13. reade. 2. Thessa. 3.
Fol. eod & pag. lin. 22 Prop. reade Prosper.
Fol. 56 pagin. 1. lin. 15. curious, reade ruinous.
Fol. 61. pag. 2. lin. 7. on, reade to.

The Preface of the Authour.

TWo things specially do moue eche godly and christian man (desiring the glorie of Christ, and the weale publique) to wish that ỹ publique affaires of the Churche, or common wealthe where he liueth, may be better set in order. The one is, ỹ memorie & record of the gret diligẽce of our elders in their good gouernmẽt. The other is, the consideration of the greate negligence in the gouerners of our tyme, in suche affayres. Therfore when and as often as I call to mynde, wyth howe greate fidelitie and endeuour the holy fathers oure auncestors in tymes past prouided, that the poore people shoulde charitably be relæued in euery parishe and Citie by the common almes. And agayne I sæ howe shamefully in these dayes the true powertie is neglected, without any care almost to relæue them.

These two things truly cause me not only to wishe and desyre hartily, that the powertie in our parishes and common wealth may better than they haue hitherto, be hereafter prouided for: but also I thinke it behouefull, for me by all meanes to labour, as much as in me

in me lyeth, to set forth some order, whereby we may at length remedie these present inconueniences.

For if there be yet any remnaunts of the Christian fayth (wherein wee so muche glorie) remayning, if there bee any sparkles of charitie (which necessarilie followeth a true and liuely fayth) harboured in our breasts, then truely wyll wee neuer suffer it to be thoughte, that either we will not, or can not persist in those vertues, wherin our auncetours (by reporte) haue alwayes excelled, when as suche as would haue their noble towardnesse, wherewith they are endewed, renoumed, must not onely endeuour to match, but also (if it may be) to surmoũt their elders in euery kinde of vertue. It is a shame to boast of holy fathers, and not to imitate their worthy examples. For which thing Christe vpbraydeth the Iewes, who vainely glozied that they were the children of Abraham, when in no poynt they did expresse the fayth or works of Abraham. Therfore in all other vertues, but especially in liberalitie towards the poore, it is requisite that we frame our whole studie to followe the holy fathers, whose examples wee see commytted to writing, and deliuered ouer to vs their poste-

ſteritie.

Which thing, the more readily and eaſily that we may in oure pariſhes and common wealthe perfourme, I will aſſay to gather and ſet forthe certayne fitte orders, whiche partely our auncеſtors were wonte to vſe in releeuing the poore, and partely are ſuche, as may for the time preſent honeſtly procure, that euery Citie may foſter their pouertie, by their Publique liberalitie. In whiche thyng, bycauſe I ſhall ſufficiently declare, bothe my great ſtudie in ſetting forthe the glorie of God within our Churches (which I wiſhe alwayes moſte earneſtly to profite yet dayly more and more, in the knowledge of ſpirituall things) and alſo ſhall expreſſe my godly deſire to helpe the true pouertie, whom no man dothe not greatly lament, either that they ſhuld ſhamefully be neglected, or periſhe, excepte his heart be altogither as harde as Adamant. Therfore I truſt this my labour to all honeſt and godly men, aſwell gouernors of Churches, as cõmon wealths, ſhall be acceptable and thank worthy. But I ſuppoſe, I may with more fruicte to all good men, of whatſoeuer degree, accompliſhe this which I haue taken in hande, if I expounde theſe titles in order as they followe.

1 That it belongeth iointly both to the Ecclesiasticall and politique gouernors, to take care for the releefe of the poore.

2 How many things there be, in these wretched times, which ought to moue vs to helpe the poore.

3 That euery parishe and Citie must take aduise, howe they may best prouide for theyr pouertie, as place and time requireth.

4 That certayne fitte men must be chosen by voyces, to take charge of ỹ whole busines.

5 What belongeth to those mens office.

6 Whiche way the true pouertie may be discerned from the counterfaites, and howe they muste be particularly searched and knowne.

7 Howe the money and necessarie charges may be raysed, without any great griefe to the Cittizens.

8 Howe the almes must be distributed to the needy particularely.

9 It must be prouided, that they which be the distributers be knowne to be faithfull and trusty men, whose estimation may not be empayred.

10 It must be prouided, that the releefe appointed for the poore, when it is once wel established, be alwayes after continued.

All

All the which things when we haue explicated, I truſt it ſhall appere that we haue prepared a ſafe and ready way for all wel diſpoſed perſons (where ſoeuer inhabiting) whoſe worthy minde ſhalbe in any wiſe ſtirred to exerciſe liberalitie towards the poore, ſo that they may cherefully and conſtantly followe it. And theſe things we will ſo euidently diſcuſſe by the holie Scriptures, and commentaries of the auncient fathers, by the Eccleſiaſtical hiſtories, Synods, & Canons of Godlie Biſhops, that ſuch men as are not to vnapte to conceyue, may (without any paine) learne out of this our cõmentarie, what is conuenient in this buſineſſe for euery time and place.

(.˙.)

Chapter. 1.

That it be belongeth ioyntly bothe to the Ecclesiasticall, and Politike gouernour, to take care for the reliefe of the poore.

IF it may like vs to make rehearsall from the olde ages, euen vnto oure tyme, of the worthier sorte of deuout workes, which did shine in the holy fathers liues: we shall finde them (especially suche as faythfully gouerned the Churche of God) very studiously bente to liberalitie towards the poore. For the admirable hospitalitie of the reuerende Patriarches Abraham and Loth, is very famous in the holy Scriptures. Moyses the chiefe minister of the holy lawe, did set forthe many holsome preceptes, for reliefe of the poore in the Churche of God, at the commaundement of God him selfe. Deut. 10. 15. Leui. 19. &c. The greater parte of the Prophets, as Ezechiel, Esaie, Jeremie and other, bothe in their Sermons, and in sundrie their actions, did euidently declare their exceeding

care for the poore, as long as they executed their office in the Church. But in the new Testamente we haue plentie of worthy examples and precepts. For howe many and howe swæte Sermons do we reade made by our sauiour Christ, in which he exciteth all men to minister necessaries to the needy, in which also he techeth vs how to bestow our almes well. Mat 5.6.8.&c? How often and how many hungry people did he fæde? howe diligent did he shewe him selfe in healing the diseased? It were too long to recken in this behalfe his mercifull pitie, beautified by a miraculous power. After Christ, the Apostles thoght that nothing did more appertayn to their office, than to inuente some good meanes to cherishe the poore. Acts. 4. v.6. Iames, Cephas, and Iohn after they had conferred with Paule about weightie matters of the Gospell, required this one thing of him especially, that he would remember the poore brethren dwelling at Ierusalem, when he came among the Gentiles, among whom he was purposed to preache the Gospell. Gal. 2. In which thing how greatly Paule laboured in *Asia, Europe, Achaia, Macedonia, Galatia*, and at Co-

rinthum, Rome, and elſe where, his owne writing, Rom. 15. 1. Cor. 16. 2. Cor. 8. and 9. do declare. The holy fathers which ſucceeded the Apoſtles in ruling and ouerſight of the church, are neuer foũd to haue reiected the charge of the pouertie from thẽ. Their cõmentaries, ſermons, and other treatiſes (wherof we may marke ẏ moſt part of thẽ to haue ben publiſhed for this proper vſe) do playnly ſhew ẏ ſame. Peruſe Tertullians Apologeticum, Cap. 39. the third booke of Ciprians Epiſtles, Epiſt. 9. and 10 to the Miniſters and Deacons, and. Lib. 3. agaynſt ẏ Iewes, Gregorie Nazanzen his ſermon περὶ φυπτοχίας of compaſſion toward the poore: Many and very behement homilies of Chriſoſtome, whereof many entreat wholly of the commendation of liberalitie towards ẏ poore: The ſumme of Chriſtian doctrine written by Epiphanius in the laſt part of that worke againſt hereſies: Hieromes epiſtle againſt Vigilantius, or his cõmentaries vpon the third chap. of Malachie the prophet: ſundry ſermons of Auſtine, whereof ſome intreate wholly of this argumente: to conclude, as many of the holy fathers as haue taken vpon them

any exharration of any booke of the olde or newe Testament, when they hytte on any place touching the commendation of liberalitie, then they stoutly mayntayne the cause of the poore. And who would require of vs at this present a rehearsal of suche places which are infinite?

Now marke with how great diligence at all times in the Synodes and Ecclesiastical councels, prouision hath bene made for the helpe of the poore. The first generall councel which was among the Christians, mencioned Acts. 4. was assembled to chose Deacons to distribute the almes which was gathered. Afterwarde in processe of time many councels were holden, wherein it is grauely and deuoutly enioyned, that the Churche shoulde relieue the poore, helpe the widdowes, orphanes, diseased, and impotent people, shoulde erect and mayntayne Almes houses, hospitals, burial places, and spittles. Prouision also was made for the due distribution of the goodes of the Churche into foure portions, whereof the one, and that the greater portion was lotted to the needie people onely, the other portions were bestowed

wed in lodging ſtraungers, burying the dead, and healing the diſeaſed, and it was ſtraightly loked vnto, that the goods of the Churche ſhoulde not be alienated or conuerted to any other vſe. By whiche things we may conceyue, that the church of God dothe acknowledge, that this office of prouiſion for the poore belongeth to hir, as by a peculiar commiſſion or charge from Almightie God. Moreouer in the Cannon lawe, very many Cannons are extant to the ſame effect, wherof parte were collected out of the Councels which we haue mentioned: but the greater parte were borrowed from the reſcriptes and anſweres of Biſhops, out of the learned commentaries of the holy fathers, *& aliunde*, as ſhall further appeare in our diſcourſe. In whiche Cannons, that is worthy to be obſerued and noted of all men, which dothe ſo often occurre (to wit) that the goods of the church (by a vſuall kinde of ſpæch) are called the goods of the poore. Therfore theſe Cannōs do alſo declare, that the churches are by a certayne right bound to norriſh and ſuccor their pouertie. The hyſtories, eſpecially

Eccleſiaſticall, do teach vs moreouer, that the gouernours of all congregations, euen from the beginning (after that religion began to ſpread it ſelfe ſomwhat at large, and that Chriſtians mighte as it were breath, and recouer them ſelues vnder fauourable princes) did with great care and fidelitie reſpecte the caſe of the needie, miniſtring bountifully things neceſſarie to the poore brethren, whiche receyued the fayth, and pretermitting none of all thoſe things, which might be required for the mayntenance of the needie: wherby oftentimes the heathen aduerſaries were moued both to receiue and embrace our religion. Wherupon the wicked Iulianus vehemently enuying that good report of the chriſtians, willed (as witneſſeth Sozomemus hiſt. Tripertitæ lib. 6. cap. 29.) that his pagane Biſhops ſhould builde hoſpitals, and almes houſes, and prouide for the needie, according as our Biſhops had done before them. Many Biſhops are renowned for ſelling the golden and ſiluer veſſels, and other riche ornamentes of the Churche, to ſuſtayne their pouertie when time required. In which number are

are reckned by Socrates Constinopolitanis hi Tripe. li. 10. ca. 6. Acacius Bishop at *Amidenum*, by Posidonius Calamensis, Augustine by Hierome, Exuperius bishop at *Tolosa*, by many writers, Ambrosius bysshop of *Millane*, and Germanus of *Alciodcon*, and of other writers sundrie other. In like maner the Bishops are reported euen to haue abridged them selues of many things, and bestowed them on suche as were oppressed with scarcitie: which we reade is noted by certayne writers, of Ciprianus, Epiphanius, Lupus Senouensis. &c. But wherefore serue all these testimonies? surely that it may appeare manifestly, that all the heads of the churches haue professed alway, that the care of the fostering of the poore dothe chiefly appertayne to them, and that they truely were not constitute to be possessours and owners, but onely stewards and disposers of the Churche goods. Which selfe things in times paste induced the kings, princes, nobles, & ech rich man to conferre and bestowe yerely reuenewes, landes, and fermes vpon the Churche, and to bequeath them in their written testaments.

For when they marked, that the almes was faithfully distributed vnto the poore, they chose rather to commit those things which they minded to deale in almes, to the disposition of the trustie officers of the church, who knew best the state of the poore, than to do it by them selues. So greatly did that vntyred diligence of the Churche in releeuing the poore, heape vp great riches to that same vse.

Neither is it obscure or vnknowne, by how many meanes the kings, princes and ciuill magistrates, after they once began to reuerence the christian religion, & to be baptised in the name of Christ, did declare that they would with like endeuour farther the cause of fostering and cherishing the poore. For very many of thē disbursed royall charges towards the buylding of hospitalles, almes houses, houses for aged people, and spittles: which Eusebius Hist. Eccl. lib. 9. cap. 10. reporteth of Constantinus, Theodosia, and Valentinianus, who were wonte (as it appeareth Triper. Histo. lib. 12. 2.) to exercise an admirable liberalitie towards ỳ poore, by Atticus Bishop of *Constantinople*. But the wife

wyfe of Valentinianus (as is declared, Tripart hist. lib. 9. cap. 31.) went from hospital to hospitall to minister vnto the nædie, taking as much paines as any hired seruant wold. The writers haue not left in silence but haue with greate consente aduaunced Iustinianus the firste, Tyberius the seconde, Cõstantinus, who was called Iconomacus, Carolus surnamed Magnus, Lodouicus Pius the first, Otho the first, second, and thyrd, Henricus the first and second, Lotharius the seconde, Sigismundus, and other Emperoures, for their readynesse in helping the powre, and in building, conseruing and bewtifying the common Hospitals of the nædie. But the Frenche kings haue seemed to excell in this behalfe, & especially Childebertus the founder of the Hospital at *Lions* (wherof mention is made in the councell of Aurelian the fifth) Dagabertus, Glotarius, Robertus, the son of Hugo Capetis, Ludouicus (who did fæde daylye. 120. nædie soules, and beside buylded a noble hospital at *Paris*) Ludouicus Crassus, and others. The kings of England also did at lengthe not slackly seke renoume by liberalitis towards the powre. Otwaldus, Alfredus, Eccarus,

rus, Guntho, the Henries and Edvvards. Among the *Boemians*, Vuenzeslaus is extolled: In *Spayne*, Alfonsus the tenth: among the *Venetians*, Petrus Vrseolus, and to bee short, there is no kingdome, no prouince, no seigniorie, no common wealth, whiche doth not euen with glorie aduaunce their kings, princes, and magistrates, carefully procuring & decreeing things deemed profitable for the succoure of the needie. For Christians haue alwayes acknowledged, but especially the Magistrats, ỳ the charge of the whole ciuile societie, and in it, not only the riche, but also the poore, (whiche is the greater parte of that societie) is enioyned thē by almightie God. Wherbate that apertaineth, when we see that renoumed princes haue added many decrees vnto the Roman lawes, where they cōmand ỳ al magistrates shold apply their mindes wholly to further ỳ cause of the poore. For so it is cōmaūded *Codicis li. 1. de sacrosanctis ecclesijs et earū priuilegijs. L. priuilegia, L. generali. L. sancim⁹ ei.* Again, *De episcopis et clericis. L. oīa priuilegia. L. si quis ad declinādū.* wher we may obserue many things wisely & religiously ordeined for the cōmō vtilitie

litie

litie of the poore, ỹ maintenaunce of hospitals, almes houses, spittles, and houses for aged people, and the right disposing of the church goods. Moreouer, ỹ law which is extãt, *Codicis li. 11. de validis mẽdicãtibus*, was made for ỹ sustenãce of the true pouertie. In ỹ Autentikes you may obserue certain things repeted & inculcate to ỹ like effect. To conclude, we may beholde throughout many colleges of the poore or almes houses endued, not only with great riches, but also singular priuileges (aboue those which their charters haue giuen thẽ) & also defended by al strẽgth of law, right & equitie, by the magistrates in whose circuite they are situate. Which things sith they are such, it is an easie matter to iudge, that it most of all behoueth such, as do sit to gouerne the helme of the cõmon wealth, with all studie and diligence, to forsee how the pouertie whiche are dispersed in theyr Cities do liue, whether they begge, which might by other meanes prouide for themselues, whether ỹ true pouertie & feble people be neglected, and whether the riches of the almes houses be faithfully disposed or not. Finally all these tende to this end, & for this

this intent verily wée haue in this present place heaped them togyther, that before we procæde farther and cōsult more plentifully of the maner of relæuing the poore, it maye be manifeste, to whome chiefly all our whole Oration is directed, and who be they whome we would haue to regard that which wée will sette foorth. For thys truly is a businesse very necessarie and profitable, but yet harde and difficile: and requirethe the furtheraunce not of one or fewe, but of many: neyther of eche man, but of suche as are of power and authoritie: wherof also it commeth that although it be of good intent propounded, yet all men doe what they can, vtterly to reiect it from themselues. For things are grown to this poynt, and (alas) all charitie is waxed so cold in mens myndes, that as often as the poore mans case is called to mynd, no man thinketh, that it is his part to vnderstande it, but one turns it on an others shoulders. The ministers of the churches complain, that they can doe nothing in so great a businesse alone: and in some places the whole right of disposing the church goods is not in their power, in some places they are not

able

able to rule the multitude, to forbid valiant beggers, to reduce the ydle persons to an order, and to performe other things of lyke sort. Contrarywyse the ciuile magistrates pretende, that this whole matter was always committed to the Churches, on whom great riches and large priuiledges were therefore bestowed, bycause it is their proper office to nourishe the poore, & other such things, those whiche are willing to drawe backewarde, do alledge.

But when by this meanes all men doe put from them this godly worke, innumerable poore people must nedes perish, and by neglecting, (or more truely to be sayd) contempt of these miserable creatures, or rather of Christ himselfe, who hath ordeined, ỹ the poore shold remain alwais w̃ vs in his stead, infinite euils must needs daily spring vp in mans societie. But beleue me these men shall neuer be able thus to satisfie their duelies, all such exceptions are emptie and barrain, it is but vaine to seeke suche starting holes. For this cause of the pouertie, is not layde on a fewe mennes shoulders only: but it apertaineth equally to as many as professe ỹ name of Chryst.

The

The diuine promises and preceps of liberalitie towards the poore, whiche are extant in the sacred Bible, yea & the threatnings or punishementes agaynst those whiche despise the pouertye, and in them Christ hym selfe, are proposed to all men which are able to do any thing in that behalfe, and are to be embraced as well of the politike magistrates, as of the Ecclesiastical gouernours. And in dæde a great and worthy worke can neuer be fynished by a fewe. Therefore it behoueth all men ioyntly to lay to their healpe and handes, and to laboure togyther for the same stoutly, whiche we wishe may redounde to the glorye of God, and to the vtilitye of the whole multitude. That thing cannot long endure which is not established by the vnitie of the mindes and publique consente of all menne. Finally wee see by daylye experience that the godly preachers in the Churche doe laye theyr foundation in vayne, as long as the magistrates dor not vouchsafe to lay to their healping hands to make vp the rest of the building. Therfore on the one side the elders of the Churche, as it were slanderobearers, on the other

side

syde, the gouernours of the cõmon welth muste mæte in one place, and consulte togither, howe they may honestly prouide for the pouertie within their circuites.

Chapter. 2.

Howe many things there be in these wretched tymes, which ought to moue vs to helpe the Poore.

BVt I hope that al mẽ of what soeuer degrée, but especially they whyche haue the chiefe rule in the cities, will then more chéerefully take paynes in deliberatyng for the publike liberalitie towards the poore, whẽ I shal haue set before their eyes, how many things are offered in these wretched tymes which ought of good right to drawe & compel men therto. First I minde to explicate how needful it is, ỳ al mẽ but especially they ỳ are of greatest authoritie in ỳ cõmon welth, be as diligent as possible they may, in furthering ỳ poore peoples cause. The Apostle Paule going about to exhort

hoꝛte the Coꝛinthians to ſende reliefe to the bꝛethꝛen at *Hieruſalem* whiche were oppꝛeſſed with ſcarcitie, in the latter Epiſtle Chap. 8. ſpeaketh to them in this wiſe. Therefoꝛe as you abound in euery thing, in faith and woꝛde, in knowlege, and in al diligence, and in youre loue towards vs, euen ſo ſee that you abound in this grace alſo. Foꝛſothe the Apoſtle wold ſignifye, that in them whyche are commended foꝛ their faith and other woꝛthy gifts and vertues, a ſingular liberalytie towards the poꝛe ought alſo to ſhine, neither can theſe foꝛmer vertues cõſiſt without this. wherfoꝛe it lyketh me now to vſe the ſame reaſon almoſt, and to ſpeake thus to all godly magiſtrates. There is none of you all, moſt woꝛthy magiſtrates, whiche dothe not pꝛofeſſe befoꝛe all men, that he repoſeth his faith wt his whole harte in Chꝛiſt Jeſu our Sauiour, and would be reckened amõg ſuche as reuerence the name of Chꝛiſt. If therefoꝛe you haue faith and deſire that other ſhoulde accoumpte you ſo, then truly it is neceſſary that you declare that faith, in ſhewing foꝛth al manner duties of charitye, but eſpeciallie liberalitye to-

towards your domesticall pouertie. It can not be chosen, but that suche frutes muste nedes follow a true and liuely fayth. Beside this, there is no subiect, whiche dothe not fully account that you do sufficientely know what you ought to doe in the affaires of the common wealth, which is committed to your truste, and specially in the behalfe of the poore and innocent: and that both you can and wil cheerefully performe those things which appertayne to your office, whiche are both iustly commaunded and straightely exacted by the lawe of almightie God, and wherof you make an inuiolable promise, at suche tyme as by othe and certain vsuall ceremonies you are openly admitted to your office. And in the meane tyme you are not ignoraunt, that that seruant which knoweth his masters will, and dothe it not, shall be beaten sore with many stripes. Wherfore make your account, that your integritie and diligence in doing youre office shall neuer be approued of God or godly men, before you haue prouided a meane in youre cõmon wealth to releeue the poore, whiche are alway the greater part in any societie. Men may be

deceyued and moked, but God will not suffer him selfe to be deluded. Neyther is there (beleue me) any more commodious way, whereby you may (which also of dutye you oughte to prouide for) withholde from your owne heads, and your subiects, the punishmẽts which God offended with our synnes dayly threatneth, yea & which we do presently sée and feele, then if you by yours counsels and examples, as wyth a watche worde, do excitate al other to a redines to lyghten the miseries of the poore. Certes, the same counsell which that wise Daniell gaue long since to Nabuchadnezar the king of *Babylon*, to wit: That whẽ the wrath of God dyd hang ouer hym, he shoulde endeuour to redéeme his synnes with giuing almes, & his iniquities with compassiõ on the poore, so should his faults be sauled or healed: Let all magistrates thinke that the same counsell is now giuen them, and if they desire to turne gods wrath from them, then let them followe that without delaye. Howe many complaints of honest Citizẽs are euery where dayly heard, tending to the same effect? Some complayne that they are molested at

at their doꝛes wyth the impoꝛtunate and shameleſſe petitions, and perpetuall clamoꝛs of many beggers. It gretly greueth others that dayly whethersoeuer they go oꝛ turne themselues, they meet with innumerable valiaunt beggers, fæding themselues plesantly and in filthie idleneſſe by other mens sweat. Other repoꝛt, that in the whole Cittie they cannot easily fynde them that wil be hyꝛed to woꝛke wyth thē foꝛ money and competēt meat and dꝛinke whē they haue nēede: yea some men doubt, that it will shoꝛtly fall out that hādy crafts shalbe vtterly lefte and neglected, when such as should and are able to learne & exercise them, will fall rather to an idle beggin, than to woꝛke and laboure. Many obserue and marke the hoꝛrible and infinite, riches of such as begge from doꝛe to doꝛe, and all men almoſt see that they are contaminate with sundꝛy kinds of wickednes. Whereby also many good men make a scruple, and withdꝛawe their hand frō geuing, while they feare ẏ ther is no reward to be loked foꝛ of almighty God foꝛ almes yll bestowed on the wicked. Foꝛ they thinke rather that he synneth grœuously,

which ministreth any thing to him, whom he iudgeth vnworthy, and foreseeth that he will shamefully abuse it. Moreouer certayne honest Cittizens are sore vexed in their consciences, when they smell that the true pouertie, whiche ether thorow continuall diseases can not, or for bashfulnesse or some other cause dare not come abrode, do perish by hunger, yea in some places do rotte in their miserable and lothsome diseases, whose careleste contempt no doubt God will at length sharply reuenge. Therfore on the one side they are moued not to giue any thing to those: and on the other side while the true pouerties case is vnknown, the occasion of their liberalitie is taken from them. To conclude, the Citizens vniuersally desire, that beggers, especially valiaut and able of body, maye bee brought in order: and that the true pouertie, that is, such as are deseased by age, sickenes or other casualtie may be prouided for and fynally that some certaine way maye be prescribed for the right expending and disposing of the common almes.

Nowe let vs see, how many things are found in the pouertie thē selues, which re-

quire

quire some new reformation. Among the pouertie some are sounde and lusty, some diseased & feble: some are of ripe yeares, and at mannes state, some yong, and yet in their childhood: and again, some are of the male sexe, some female. First therfore we se in what sorte those valiant persons doe liue, whom for yeares we would iudge to be men: but they so passe all their lyfe, that a man may doubt, whether they be christians, or Iewes, or Turkes. For they neuer set foote within the churche, but alway lye before the church dores, or wher they may be so suffred, in the midst of the stretes, in crosseways, on bridges, and those places, whither they know there is most cõcourse of people. So that they neuer heare godly sermons, they learne no point of christian religion, and much lesse vse the sacramẽts in common with others. And by reason they seldom stay in one place, & wandring euery where do often change their soyle & aire, but neuer their mynde, no man examineth their lyfe: no pastor, no teacher, no deacon, nor any other supposeth that he ought to regard their saluation: & although perchance they carie a woman about with

them, yet is it vnknowne whether they liue in lauful wedlock, or rather passe their time in the licēcious lusts of whordom, in which state of lyfe in the end they happen to die: is there any cause I praye you why we should iudge them better than beasts? And this which I haue here sayde of men, may lykewise be vnderstood of yong women, yong men, & children. For they are al equally vnskilful in ỹ articles of religion. And is it not greatly to be pitied, and with vnfayned teares to be lamented, that almost infinite beggers shoulde thus perishe lyke brute beastes, without God, without law without al knowledge of their soules health: whose destruction to whom shal it be imputed, but to the heads of the church, and the magistrates, to whom it belōgeth to prouide, that as many as liue in any place within their circuites, shoulde professe the name of Christe, and reuerence him, and shoulde declare themselues to be christians by some confession of the Christian articles, and the vse of the Sacramentes? Moreouer, by what practises, deceytes, and suttleties, doe the moste parte of these gette theyr lyuyng?

Sure-

Surely they make a gayne and a fatte encrease of their begging, whereby they wring out of the simple liberalitie of good Citizens, not only sufficiente to preserue nature: but also to lashe out and waste in riot, and stolne banquets, wyth feasting quaffing and whore hunting. Which that they may the easlier atchiue, one fayneth him selfe to be a straunger and to dwell far off, desyring releese to help hym homeward, that his house and all his goods haue ben wasted wyth fyre, or water, or by wrõg iudgment at the law, or some other casualty: an other lyeth saying that he hath sicke wife, & many smal children at home: one maketh a shew of new & strãge kinds of vlcers, daubing his shins, or his armes, with rosen, frankensence, pitch, bloud, and other corruptiõ: an other falleth down voluntarily in the midst of ỹ street, tearing his body, & trembling euery ioynt, foming at ỹ mouth as though he had ỹ falling sickenesse: other coũterfait halting, lamenesse, maimednesse, deafnes blindnes, madnes, dõbnesse, & ỹ is most to be marueled at, as though it wer not sufficiẽt to vse these practises & words cunningly framed to entice

and bewitche mens eyes oftentymes also they shewe letteas, I knowe not from whence, to get credite to their impudent lies wheres they are not knowne. At my being at *Lutetia* now called *Paris*, I sawe one Rooatus a chiefe deuiser of such fraudes, who (by report) was wont to set open as it were a schole or shop of the same, and to teach rules of this wicked arte to suche as woulde resorte to him: who also was founde to haue scraped so muche together therby, ẏ he gaue a riche dowrie wyth his daughter. Now when these men by these frauds, deceyts & engins do moue al sorts of mẽ to pitie them, & to giue them almes, and seeyng they bee not altogyther helpelesse, (for they myghte, yf they woulde, fede themselues by their owne handy labour) but do willingly & wittingly snatch all the almes from the true pouertie, as it were the morsell out of their mouth: who seeth not that they are giltie of euill practises (whiche worde is not conuenient inough for the vnworthinesse of the thing) but also of theft and sacrilege? Yet is this deceytful practise cõmon to men, women, & children. But these, these are but trifles

in

in respect of those which I will nowe re-
porte. These valiant beggers haue bene
taken wandring as spies throughout the
Prouinces and dominions of kings, to
hearken craftily for rumours of peace or
warre, of the counsels & deuises of kings
and princes, to carrie letters of treason,
and sometime to play the traitors them
selues, to shew the enimies the hie wayes
and ports, to set on fyre cities, boroughes,
stretes and villages: to burne vp the ripe
corne fieldes and woodes: to infecte the
springs and welles with poyson: to com-
mitte rapes, murthers, and robberies in
woods and thickes, and through the whole
countreys. They accompanie one while
with one woman, and an other time with
an other, and care not for stable matri-
monie: the moste of the women do pro-
stitute them selues to who so euer wyll,
and infecte many with the French pocks,
or other more noysome diseases: They
thinke they may without controlemente
steale clothes, meate, or drinke out of gar-
dens and houses: and to the ende they
may the soner moue to pitie honest and
simple matrons with hauing children at

their tayle, they steale other folkes children, and cast thē off againe at their pleasure. Their owne children they lay forth, (and it hath bene heard that some haue drowned them, some haue left them in the woods for wilde beasts) they mingle poysons to make barēnesse, & teach others to do the like: they play ỳ baudes betwene citizens children, and adulterers: they carrie letters, tokens and gifts betwæne louers. I am ashamed to reckē these things, and yet they are knowne to be true, and I haue not hitherto spoken all. So farforth is it too true that is said cōmonly: *Paupertas turpia cogit*, pouertie forceth much wickednesse: & Eurip. sayth, ỳ pouertie & lack teacheth a man much euil. Therfore if we desire to hinder so many enormities, to stay in time so many outrages, to driue out of the common wealth this swarme of hopelesse men, thē it is necessarie that the magistrates begin some trade, whereby the whole pouertie may at once be brought in order.

I haue spoken hitherto of the valiaunt beggers. Nowe it remayneth that we intreat of such as are not valiant, but may

of

of good right be called the pouertie. Amõg these, some are brokẽ with age, & beraued of all strength: other are tormented with sickneſſe, vlcers, & continuall maladies, & lye lurking in some homely cottage: and in the meane time none attende on them, so that they weare away by little & little with hunger & penury of all things, while none come at them. You may sée poore wemen beset with a flock of little childrẽ euẽ perish, beeing tyred with ỹ daily houlings and teares of them, while they aske bread or other things, whiche they haue not to giue, & cõsumed with continual griefs day and night. To these this miserie aboue the reſt may be ioyned: Certain euẽ as it wer born to calamitie & wretchednes, altho by ỹ liberality of other somtime they get som thing, yet they can not vse it rightly, they haue no forecaſt, no knowledge to guyde their substaunce, they neuer thinke of sparing or frugalitie, they are vnskilful in ordering of euery thing, they go about what so euer vnaduisedly & prepoſterously, they haue no regarde of health, or time, or any thing elſe: to be short, they are such as tho they had gret welth, yet in short time they will

will perishe with penurie. So that it is needful that tutours and ouerseers should be appoynted for these, aswell as for Orphanes. But howe many are there which yet remayne vnknowne and obscure, which deserue right wel to be relæued by the common almes. For oftentimes it falleth out, that some which occupying honest handie crafts, or marchaundise were in good case to liue, may contrary bothe to their owne and other mens expectation of them, be brought to extreme pouertie, not through their owne default: but beeing circumuented by subtill creditours, or deceyued by slack detters, or oppressed with vsuries, or spoyled of their wares in iorneying, or thrust out of their heritage by the force of their aduersarie, and iniquitie of corrupt iudges, or exhaust with many exactions, or consumed with sodayne fyre, shipwracke, or other casualties. These men, whereas before they were had in estimation, and now fearing to come in contempt, they dare not open their case, but cloke it as much as they are able, and beside, beeing of a bashfull nature, they complayne to none, nor craue nothing of any.

any. Therefore at home they pyne with famine, and for very greefe of minde they can not tell what is best to be done, but surely to liue, and with other men to beholde the light is tedious to them. Whose necessitie, except it be relieued in time, it can not be but that they muste needes weare away by little and little with miserie and mourning. Lastly there remaine innumerable children, creeping and running in the poore cottages, which are to be loked vnto. But the parents slouth, ignorance or beggerie, or all these togither, do let them from learning in their tender yeres the elements of Christian religion, from accustoming honest and ciuill maners, and from applying their mindes to learne some art and labour, as yeres come on. What then? shall we suffer these innocent children (among whome doubtles some are borne to good destinies, & might in time to come sitte to gouerne the common wealth with good successe) to be corrupted while they are but blades, and to growe vp as brute beastes without all knowledge of godlynesse or honestie? That may not be. Therefore the Magi-

strates

ſtrates (which are the general tutors and and ouerſeers, and I may wel ſay parēts, (for they are called *patres patriæ*) of al that dwell in their citie) muſt know that theſe are eſpecially committed to them by almightie God: they muſt prouide by ſome meanes, that theſe may be well nourtured in godlyneſſe, in good maners, in honeſt artes, whereby they may get their liuing in time to come. And thus hitherto (I doubt leaſt in too many words) I haue ſhewed howe nædefull it is to take wholſome aduiſe for the relæſe of the neceſſities of the poore. It reſteth that we ſhewe howe many commodities ſhall enſue to al eſtates, when that which we propound ſhall be accompliſhed. For not onely the poore, but all and ſingular the Citizens, yea and the Magiſtrates them ſelues ſhall feele no ſmall commodities by this godly ordinaunce. For truely the Maiſtrates may well counte it a great gayne, to atchieue this glorie to them ſelues for euer, that they by furthering the pouerties cauſe, haue deliuered the common wealth from greate and daungerous diſcommodities and encombrances: that they

they haue purged it of that ſtinke of deſpe-
rate men, I meane valiant beggers: that
they haue bene the meane that many for-
lorne men doe liue honeſtly, godly, and
quietly, vndoubted and immortall prayſe
reſteth for al ſuche as declare them ſelues
zelous in this behalfe. It is alſo moſt cer-
tayne, that whatſoeuer trauell the Magi-
ſtrates ſhal beſtowe and employ in fauor
of the pouertie, they ſhall perceyue it at
length largely recompenſed, aſwel by god
him ſelfe, as by men. Thus ſhall it be re-
compenſed of men, when as many as ſhal
vnderſtande them ſelues to be holpen by
the publike liberalitie, ſhall alwayes be
readie to obey and pleaſe by all mea-
nes, eſpecially they will commende thoſe
deuoute Magiſtrates in their prayers to
Almightie God, and pray hartilye for
their ſafetie. The which benefite there
is no cauſe why any ſhoulde accounte
as a ſmall matter. For God dothe wil-
lingly heare the prayers and cryes of the
poore, and there is nothyng ſo highe or
excellente, but by prayers it maye bee
obtayned of Almightie God, which the
Apoſtle Paule willeth al mẽ attẽtiuely to

conſi-

consider, when. 2. Cor. 9. he sayth. That the pouertie do giue thanks continuall, and glorifie God, and pray for the saluation of those whiche studie for to relieue their lacke, and in the same place wishing to excite all men to exercise liberalitie towardes the poore, he doubteth not to affirme, that God can bring to passe, that the whole benigne may redound to them that giue, ỹ hauing all sufficiencie in al things they may abounde in euery good grace, as it is written Psalm. 112. He hath dispersed abroade, and giuen to the poore, his righteousnesse remayneth for euer. Whiche things, sithe they be true (for who wyll doubte of the sentence of the holy ghost) all magistrates oughte throughly to be persuaded, that they shall not lose that labour which they bestowe in promoting the cause of the poore: but that they shall receyue at Gods hande, who suffereth no good worke to passe vnrewarded, some blessing, either in spirituall and internall things, or in temporall and externall, or in both. To doubt of the promises of God it were a great wickednesse. But no man is able to vtter how many and how great

commo-

commodities shall ensue to the pouertie them selues, the matter beeing so ordered for them as we will after declare. First they which hitherto were vtterly neglected, so that it was not knowne whether they were Christians, or of some strange religion, hereafter shall be present deuoutly at the holy assemblies with other godly men, shall here attentiuely the sermons and interpretations of holy scriptures, shall learne the articles and elements of Christianitie, shall vse the Sacraments instituted by Christ with fayth and reuerence, shall liue hencefworth iustly, deuoutly and soberly: to be briefe, none of all those things which are required to their soules healthe shall be withholden from them. But especially those valiaunt beggers, which we discried to be contaminate with euery kinde of wickednesse, shal be brought in order, and beeing gently admonished, shall renounce their vngraciousnesse, and returne into the right way, or beeing constrayned by sharper correction, shall be weary of it. By which meanes, besides that horrible outrages, as theefte, whoredome, murther, fyrings,

and treasons (and who can recken the rest?) shal be auoyded out of the common wealth: they also which seemed to be castawayes, and giuen ouer to eternall damnation, shall see agayne the way to saluation set open to them, and bringing forth due fruits of repentance, shal vndoubtedly obteyne eternall life. Those men children also which partly by the prouocation of their parents, partly of their owne accord would conforme them selues to beggerie, and to all filthinesse incident to the same, shall in their youth be sent to schole to learne good litterature, and become ciuill thereby: suche as shall be founde vnapte to take learning, shall be put to sundrie artificers, to learne their craftes: and thus oftentimes, they whose parents, yea perhaps, graundfathers, and greategraundfathers for many yeres liued by begging, shall nowe beginne to sustayne them selues by their owne art and labor: and that which is maye to be reioyced at, shall trayn vp their children in integritie of life and maners, and in the knowledge of honest arts. The maidens, before their chastitie shal be endaungered, shal submit them

them selues to the rule of honest matrõs, and shall by their diligent seruice earne their meat and drinke with cõmendation. If any heretofore haue offended, those being corrected by holsome reprehensions, or reclaymed, and as it were lifted vp out of their filthinesse by gentle admonitions, shall frame them selues to chastitie and honest life. To conclude, the whole pouertie, which liued licentiously, shall be reduced to a newnesse of life, no doubt to the glorie of God, to the ioy of the holy Angels, which reioyce at ỹ repentance of one sinner, to the edifying & comfort of al godly men, and the holy congregatiõ. When thus the saluation of the soule is prouided for, the bodies also & the rest shalbe in better case: they which of late went naked, & in tottred cloutes, now shall go well clad and appareled: they which fainted wt hunger & thirst, shal now be refreshed wt cõpetent meat & drinke: they which sterued in cotages wt colde, diseases, & maladies, shal now haue their bodies cherished wt tẽperate heat, & shal come abrode, recouering bodily strẽgth: they which lay wout doors, shal be receyued into houses, aged people

shall haue some to attende on them: they which were infected with scabbes, vlcers, Hernia, the stone, and other diseases, shall be restored to health by the publike liberalitie: they that seemed to be consumed with sorrowe and mourning, shall be comforted by other. Moreouer they which are, as it were, borne to miserie, and are altogither careless of their businesse, negligēt, without forecast, making hauocke of all things, because they greatly neede the prouidence and aduise of other, they shall perceiue that their substance is very profitably disposed for their behoofe. But suche as hide their pouertie, and woulde not haue it knowne for certayne causes, may nowe without shame breake their mindes to some good men, and obtein some reliefe of the common bore, till they shall be able better to prouide for them selues. Finally, none of all the multitude of pouertie may iustly complayne, that he lacketh any thing which is requisite for the competent mayntenaunce of the body. Furthermore, all the Citizens shall reioyce, and shall thinke the whole common wealth to be beautified with exceeding great

great blessinges. For first, they shall ioy to see the citie deliuered from that grieuous burthen of infinite valiant beggers, whether they be strangers or domesticall. For these muste at once (as we will after teache) be prohibited and brought in order. They shall no more be molested with the clamours & importunate petitions of beggers, meeting with them at the church dores, & at their priuate dores, & in euery place. They shal perceyue ỹ they are deliuered frō the feare of those great dangers, whiche we shewed before came by beggers, those outrages which were wonte to be committed, hereafter shall not once be named. Those monstrous bodies, or deformed with sundrie diseases, bloude, matter, wounds, and lothsome filthinesse, shall not be sette in sighte to terrifie and dismay women great with childe, or any other, which are sone troubled with the sighte of suche gastly and sodayne shewes. Besides this, there shall be fewer diseased people in the citie, and contagious diseases shall be cleane shutte out. If at any time the Citizens take some to labour or worke with them, they shall finde them

muche moze ready than before. For filthie idleneſſe ſhal after a ſorte be baniſhed out of the whole citie, the vſe alſo of many honeſt artes, which ſæmed before to be neglected, ſhall nowe flouriſhe agayne. To conclude, all men will endeuour to get their liuing by ſome handie labour, which is honeſt and acceptable before God. Moreouer the citizens will contribute to the common almes more willingly and liberally, becauſe they knowe that what ſoeuer is beſtowed, is faythfully dealt to ſuche as be poore in deede. And when linnen, or wollen cloth, or made garments, lether, or ſhoes, and ſuche things neceſſarie for this life, muſt particularly be diſtributed, then doubtleſſe many of the citizens, of whome thoſe things muſte be bought, ſhall gayne thereby, where otherwiſe they ſhould not. Laſtly, all the inhabitaunts of meane and competente eſtate will followe their callings wyth more chearefull and quiet mindes than before, and caſting all their cogitations & cares vpon God alone, wil conceiue vndoubted hope, that neither they nor their children ſhall want things neceſſarie for

this

this life, although they should be decaied by any sodayn casualtie. This also shal cause one neighbour with mutuall loue to embrace an other: the riche man without offence or disdayne wil salute the poore mã: and agayne the poore neighbour will not be ashamed to resalute the riche, and to wishe him well: briefly the whole Citie shall be as one house, in which al men are ioyned togither in most perfect frendshippe, and knitte with a knotte whiche can not be dissolued: and beleeue me, the whole state of the common wealthe shall be muche more blessed, than Plato or any other Philosopher in his solitarie contemplation can describe in paper. But it can not be knowne till we haue had experience a whyle, what plentifull commodities will ryse to the common wealth, and the whole ciuill societie, by this godly order. Wherefore it behoueth vs to make an ende of this Chapter, and to proceede to explicate howe the poore, bothe may and oughte in euery citie to be prouided for.

Chapter.3.

That euery Parishe and Citie muſt take aduiſe, howe they may beſt prouide for their pouertie, as place and time requireth.

NO man may ſuppoſe that wee are able to preſcribe ſuche a way for the releeuing of the poore, as may be applyed to euery place and time, and may ſatiſfie euery mans witte. For that is as harde to be done, as to make one politike lawe which may ſerue in euery ciuill ſocietie alyke, without any exception or interpretation, to be conſtrued according to the rule of equitie. Therefore when we haue propounded a generall example in theſe matters, then it is expediēt, that the heads of the Churches them ſelues, and the magiſtrates in euery their cities do prouidētly deliberate, howe they may ordeine the like to be applied to their people. For it is mēete to conſult far otherwiſe in a large & populous citie, thā in one ỳ is ſmal & little inha-

inhabited: one thing is to be determined where the Churche hath a riche treasurie, an other, where it is but poore, that counsell may serue where the Citizens are for the most part wealthy & charges of expenses great, which will not serue where the citizens are poore, and do liue hardely: an order may be taken in the tyme of a common dearth, and when all things are dere sold in the land, which may be altred when all things are plentie and cheape: to conclude sundry circumstances do require seuerall considerations: whereunto appertaineth that which ỹ apostle wisely admonisheth vs of. 2. Cor. 8. That almes should be dealt according to the abilitie of the citizens, in due proportion & equalitie. Performe you (inquit) that good worke as farre forth as you can. For if there be first a willing mynde, it is accepted, according to that which a man hath, and not according to that he hath not, neyther is it that other men should be eased, and you grœued: but vpon lyke condition at this present tyme, that your abundaunce may supplye theyr lacke, and also their abundance may be for youre lacke, that there may be equalitie.

As it is writtē: he ẏ gathered much had nothing ouer, and he that gathered little had not ẏ lesse. But it is wel knowne, that our auncesters in the primatiue Church had a great care, to inuēt a certayn order, ẏ euery Cittie myght fæde their nædy people. For if ẏ apostle Paule did so earnestly stir vp the cōgregatiōs of the gentils throughout *Achaia*, especially at *Corinthū* in *Macedonia*, *Galatia* in *Italie* and *Rome*, and all abrode: to sende relæfe to their brethren whom they knew not but dwelt farre off in *Iudæa*: who dothe not conceiue hereby, that it was ordeyned and ratifyed before in euery of these Churches, that they shold relæue the pouertie that dwelte among them? And euen vnto the time of Pelagius the fyrst the 60. Byshop of *Rome*, that is, til the yeare of the Lord. 560. all the gouernours of the Churches and the magistrats in euery place dyd laboure diligently in that matter, as maye be proued by diuers arguments. For vnder Pelagius was holden the second synode at *Turon*, in whiche Can. 5. we reade it was decræd, that euery citie shoulde fæde according to their habilitie all their poore and nædy inhabitants with

with cõpetẽt fode: so should they not nede to wander in other citties, and as well the elders of the Churche nere adioyning, as the Cittizens shold releue their owne pouertie, those ar the wordes of the Canõ. Tyberius the secõd, that right godly Emperor did greatly aduaunce that age, whose liberalitie towards ỹ poore, is celebrated to be such, that many historiographers haue reported, that he was accused of some as a waster of the imperiall treasure: bycause he bestowed all the reuenues and tribute exactions, whiche his antecessor Iustinus, a couetous mã, had gathered togyther, and the tresure of Narsetes whiche were found in a certayne well in *Italy*, on the poore. Volateranus & other more reporte no lesse. John Bysshop of *Alexãdria* was famous at the same time, who for his vntired diligẽce in helping the poore is commonly honored euẽ to this day by ỹ name Eleemosinarius: or Almner. Childebert[5] the frẽche king, & German[9] bishop of *Paris* were incidẽt to ỹ same time, who did not doubt to cõtẽd togither of liberalitie towards the poore: as the author Fasciculi temporũ, & certayne other witnesse. After Pelagius 250. yeres vnder ỹ empire

empire of Carolus Magnus (who gouer-
ned in the yeare of our Lorde. 814. the po-
uerties cause was so diligently loked vn-
to by certaine godly men, that it was not
only enioyned to euery citie and parrishe
that they should cherish their pouertie ac-
cording to the old custome: but also search
was made in euerye familie and priuate
house, & charge giuen by ỹ authoritie of the
Emperour, that in euery great familie or
kinred they whiche were riche, should ho-
nestly prouide for the pouertie belonging
to that familie or kinrede. For when the
treasorie of the church, and the daily allo-
wance of almes was not sufficient to su-
steyne all those, which sought to be relæ-
ued of the common liberalitie: then neces-
sitie inforced the godly men to bethinke
them of a new aduise, to ease the burthen
of the parishes and cities, by inducing the
riche men after this sorte to relæue them
in their families. We reade, that it was
decræd of this matter in the synods at A-
relas, holden at the commaundement of
the Emperor Carolus, in the Can. 14. it is
thus set forth: That euery one in the time
of famine or any necessitie should relieue

accor-

acoꝛding to his powꝛer ſuch as apperteyn to them, bicauſe it is wꝛitten: Bleſſed are the mercyfull, foꝛ they ſhall obteyne mercis: and againe, Giue, and it ſhal be giuen to you: remit, and yours ſhall be remitted &c. Againe in the ſynode at *Turon*, vnder the ſame Carolus, Can. 36. It is commonly enioyned to all, that euery one ſhould endeuoꝛ to nouriſh & refreſh all the pouertie, appertaining to theyꝛ familie, acoꝛdyng to the ſeaſon of the yere, bicauſe it is vngodly, and odious in the ſight of God, that they which abound in riches, & exceede in welth, ſhould not help the miſerable and nedie people. In the meane tyme the later Canons of this ſynode the. 10. 11 16. doe playnly teſtifie, that the powꝛe were pꝛouided foꝛ in euery citie and pariſhe of the cõmon treaſoꝛie of the church, and the dayly collections among the faythfull Chꝛiſtians. Foꝛ in thoſe Cannons it is ſtraightly commaunded, that the Byſhopps ſhoulde haue a great care and reſpecte to the powꝛe, and ſhoulde in the pꝛeſence of the elders and deacons aſſembled foꝛ to conferre of other matters of the Church, circumſpectly, as the miniſters of God, diſpoſe and

deale

deale them to the powre of the same parishe, as euery one hath néede, according to the meaning and intente of the Cannon. And without doubte thys greate fidelitie and diligence of the Churche rulers in the pouerties behalfe, dyd moue Charles the greate at that tyme, and many other after hym, that partly in *France*, and partely in *Germanie*, they did erecte many houses of religion, and many fraternities (whyche were no other at that tyme but harbourehouses for the powre) and they endued them wyth greate ryches. Therefore that order which was in tymes paste so constantlye kepte for the mayntenaunce of the powre: to wit, that euery citie and parish did foster their domesticall and home dwelling pouertie: the same would now bée well put in vre agayne: and euery Citie with one consente, muste consulte thereof according to their state and abilitie.

Chapter. 4.

That certen fit men muſt be choſen by voyces, to take charge of the vvhole buſineſſe.

BEfore all things it behoueth to chooſe in euery pariſhe and circuite, certaine menne of tryed honeſtie, whoſe fidelitie, pietie, grauitie, and integritie is well knowen, by whom it ſhal be foreſeene how all the pouertie aſcribed to their ciuill societie or circuits may be brought in order: whiche men muſt be choſen by the cõmon conſent, as wel of the church gouerners, as the magiſtrates: vnder which name I cõprehend al thoſe which are put in truſt in any office in citie, borough or village. For it is always mæte, ỹ euery of theſe in any waightie or godly buſineſſe ſhoulde lay to their helping hande. And it is ſufficient if in a village or ſtreate three or foure bee appoynted for thys purpoſe, accordynge as tyme and place ſeruеth: but in greater Citties it is mæte, that in euerye Pariſhe or warde, as manye ouerſeers be

choſen

chosen. And if necessitie require, in a populous citie it shal be wel that foure other be set ouer the reste, as of a higher dignitie, and hauing the chiefe rule ouer the rest: to whom the other foures which are elected in euery parish shal haue recourse sometyme to consulte wyth them, and to open vnto them the harder cases whiche happen to come in question: to whome also the pouertie themselues may resort, and if they haue any complaintes may opē thē vnto them: by whom also, if nēde require, the other ouerseers maye be admonished, and the disobedient pouertie may be corrected and punished: to cōclude before them shalbe pleaded and discussed all matters which appertaine to good order in the pouerties behalfe. This manner of electing approued men, to take charge of the pouertie, is set forth in the primatiue Churche by the Apostles themselues. For all the faithfull did by al meanes laboure for that, that none among them myght be seene to lacke. So that such as possessed lands and houses, sold them, & layde the price downe at the Apostles fete (whiche was expedient at that time to be done at *Hierusalem*, and

and not els where, partely for the crueltie of the vngodly magistrates, who enterprised then echewhere to robbe the Christians good from them violently: and partely bycause the faithfull by the ordinaunce of God not long after shoulde flæte from thence to sæke other dwellings, and to preache and plant the Gospell in sundry coasts) whiche was afterward distributed faithfully to echo man and womã as they had nëde. Act. 4. but when that office of receyuing and laying ou agayne of the dayly charges, was so troublesome to ỹ Apostles, that for it they dyd intermitte often tymes a better worke: to wit, the preching of the Gospell, and besydes many controuersies did rise aboute the daily waiting: The Apostle calling the multitude togyther gaue this counsell Act. 6 It lyketh vs not (inquiũt) that we shold leaue the preaching of the word of God to serue tables: wherefore brethren loke you out among you seuen men of honeste report, and full of the holy Ghost, and wisdom, which we may appoint to this busines, and we wil giue our selues continually to prayer, and to the ministration of the worde: and this

saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose seuen men, which are there named. The *Corinthians* also. 1. Cor. 16. ar bidden by Paule to appoint whom they wold haue to bring their liberalitie vnto *Hierusalem*: and again. 2. Cor 8. & 9. he sayth, that he hath sent Titus, a worthie and diligent minister of the Churche, and with him an other brother, whose praise is in ỹ gospell, (whom some geasse to be Luke, some Barnabas) & a third man also, whō he had oftē proued trustie & diligent in many things: these were apointed by Paule to preferre to the Corinthians, the cause of the brethren, which were oppressed with extreme penurie at Ierusalem. Therfore let it not grēue vs to consider the example and purpose of the holy apostles, and as time and place will beare, followe them. But whether more or lesse than wee haue spoken of, must be chosen to sée to this businesse, we will not greatly striue: séeing the regard of the place & nūber of pouertie will teache vs what is needful to be done in it. Much lesse will we contend of the names of the officers. For the primatiue churche called them Deacons, whiche appeareth not

not onely out of the Actes of the apostles, but out of Eusebius hist. Eccl. lib. 2. cap. 1. In the history of D. Laurentius the martyr, they are called Leuites. Therefore whether you do call them by that name, or by any other, the matter is not great: as yf they were called Maysters of the poore, ouerseers, viewers, visiters, stuardes, or disposers, Almners. &c We will easyly agree in the name, when we haue determined of the thing it selfe.

But these menne must be greatly had in estimation of all men, and also sometyme muste bee admonished, or rather intreated by the ministers of the churches, and magistrates, that vpon certain sette dayes and houres, they wil willingly ioyn some godly paynes with theyr honorable function for keeping of orders, not doubting but that they shall receyue incomparable and eternall rewardes at the handes of almyghtie God, and we ought to be persuaded, that that comendation wherw̃ the Apostle setteth forth those three men, which he sendeth to *Corinthum*, to gather the almes, whiche shoulde be caried to the brethren in *Iudæa*, doth belõg to them also

whiche do take vppon them the office of prouiding for the poore, & haue a care faithfully to performe the same in these dayes.

Chapter. 5.

VVhat belongeth to the office of them vvhich are chosen to ouersee the Poore.

AS we haue sayde that this office deserueth great estimatiõ, so we must all needs acknowledge, that it is not free from a great toyle, for the office of the ouersæers is manyfolde and wayghty, which for more playneneſſe and order sake maye be fytly brought to fyue principall points.

First, that they serch diligẽtly throughout euery citie & parish ỹ number of those, which desire to be relæued of the publike almes, and ỹ they can wisely discerne the true pouertie, and those that deserue to be pitied, from the counterfets & vnworthy.

Secondly, that they wisely can cast, how the money and necessary charges may be leuied

leuied and collected honestly, and without ouercharging the Citizens & inhabitants.

Thirdly, how they should rightly distribute the almes collected, to the needie, according to the qualitie of the persons and the rule of equitie.

Fourthly, that they be ready to render an accoumpts of that they haue receyued and layd out: either to the magistrats and certayne ministers of the Churches at a time appointed: or els before all men in a publike place and session: so to maynteine and approue vnto all men both their authoritie, and their trustinesse.

Fifthly, they shall labour what they can to bring to passe, that the order for the releefe of the poore being once well determined and begun to be obserued, may alwayes after be retayned, continued and kept.

To these fiue points of thys whole businesse they which shalbe chosen to this office shalbe wholy bent and shall direct all their cares and cogitations, to performe them. But to the end they may the soner, easelyer and without hinderaunce accomplishe, whatsoeuer they shall holsomly de-

termine, it is very nædefull that as well the Churche rulers, as the gouernoures of the common wealthe, do withoute delaye, ayde and assiste them, and that they redily by their publique authoritye doe charge prohibite, constitute, and publishe to the whole multitude, what soeuer are thoughte necessarye and profitable to the setting forthe of the liberalitie towardes the poore. The healpe of many neyghboures, and especially suche as be strong, is required at the raysing or erecting of any ample or magnificall frame of buylding. Neyther maye we hope that the Deacons, be they neuer so godly or prudent, can do anye thing worthye of commendation among the rude multitude, whiche alwayes carpe and murmure againste good lawes, except the magistrates also do prudently intermedle their authoritie, and declare openly, that they will and decree the same that the Deacons doe. Nowe we will shewe in order, howe those thinges whyche we haue reckned to appertayne to thys office maye bee accomplished.

Howe

Chapter. 6.

Howe the pouertie muſt be ſearched, and thoſe that are in deede, to be diſcerned from the counterfeiters and diſſemblers.

Before any certaine forme to releeue the poore according to the meaſure of their neceſſitie bee appointed, it is needfull (as we haue ſayde) that the number of thoſe whiche deſire to bee reckened among the pouertie, and to be norriſhed of the publik liberalite in ỹ cities or villages, be known. And that this may be done, it is meet firſt that the deacons or viewers doe diligently viewe all places in the Citie, and that they goe into the homely cottages of the poore, to ſearche narrowly, and to ſette it downe in bookes made for the ſame purpoſe, howe manye lyue vnder one roofe, of what age, abilitie, or ſtrength, what charge of chyldren, or diſeaſed perſons they haue, what ſtore of ſubſtaunce or houſeholde ſtuffe they bee furnyſhed with. They myghte ſende Beadles to

call them all in order oute of euery house to some one place, where euery one of the pouertie in the presence of al the deacons or viewers might professe in what state they are: but the other is the safer waye for many causes. For no doubt it may better be discerned by eye sight than by their talke, howe they are affected in bodyly strengthe, or healthe, howe many, and what maner children, and what household stuffe they haue, whether they haue any diseased in their houses, & what their disease is. &c. Neyther is it sufficient to heare the pouertie them selues declare theyr owne estate, but it is expedient afterward to receiue the reports and testimonies of the neighbours that dwell neere, by whom also the good conuersation of eche of the pouertie may be knowne more narowly.

But in the entraunce to this place, I must ouerthrow the fonde cauillation of certaine, whiche holde, that the pouertie ought not thus curiously to be searched. Wee maye giue oure almes (saye they) to whome wee lyste: so that wee deale it in the name of Christe, it is no matter on whoms we bestowe it. Yet no man I

suppose

ſuppoſe is ignorãunt, that there is diſcre-
tion to be vſed in our liberalitie, and re-
garde to be had, not onely of the matter
and cauſes, but alſo of perſons. As tou-
ching the matter, when it is expedient to
giue to euery one alike, as we ſée their
nœde, and not to giue all to one: as tou-
ching the perſons: bycauſe it is certayne
that we ought rather to giue to thoſe that
are honeſt & godly, thã to ſinners and euil
liuers, and one hath more nœde, an other
is contente with leſſe. Of which matter
both S. Auguſtine in many places, & Am-
broſe in his bookes of Offices or duties
haue wiſely defined, whoſe wordes we ſée
recited by Gratianus diſtinct. 86. Neither
is that ſearch fault worthy, which is made
to helpe the poore, not to hurte any man,
and which is ordeined to procure the com-
mon ſafetie of all, aſwel ſuche as be poore
in deede, as ſuche as are not ſo. For their
priuate neceſſitie when it is knowne,
dothe make them to be well prouided for.
The others idleneſſe béeing founde out,
dothe make them to be brought in order,
and reſtrayne them from liuing by other
mens ſweat, which doth redoũd to the vti-

litie both of them and others. For he committeth a græuous offence, which impudētly dares craue to liue of an other mans trencher, when he might get his owne liuing with his labor. Moreouer it is euident, that the pouertie when they are demaunded of their estate, they dissemble many things slyly, they forge not a fewe things impudently: in the ende they open nothing, but that which they thinke may auayle to moue mens hearts to pitie, and to wrest from them a greater alowance of almes. But all men know, that not euery one is worthy to be pitied, which desireth to be thought worthy. And truely if euery ones tale shuld be credited, as they can set it forth, you shoulde haue strayghtway suche a number of pouertie, as the welthiest citie in a realme could not mayntaine or relieue. Bicause therfore it can neuer be perfectly knowne by their owne report in what state they be, it is not only lawful but also very nædfull, to haue a more diligent view or searche. But after that it is once knowen how great a multitude of nedie people is in ỹ citie, it resteth that it be determined, & with iugement defined, who ought

ought of equitie to be releeued, & who to be excluded from the publike liberalitie. And truly I do not see how we may more speedily & prudently determine in this behalf, than if we follow the custome & iudgemēt of ỹ old church. Let vs seeke therfore, what they were whō the old church did estéeme to be poore, & worthy of the cōmon almes.

We see the cause of widdowes, fatherlesse childrē, & strangers, cōmended studiously, & in the first place vnto al men throughout the law, & the prophets Deu. 14. 24. And Christ. Math. 25. reckeneth those which are hungry & thirstie, not by their owne fault or wicked will, but through very penurie: He reckeneth the harborlesse, that is, straungers: he reckneth the naked, the diseased, the captiues. In the Parable of the riche man, Luke. 16. Lazarus is described to be full of sores, and hungry, desiring to be refreshed with the crummes whiche fell from the riche mans table. Againe. Luke. 14. Christ speaking of the poore, who should be bidden to the feast, nameth the feeble, the halte, and the blinde. Acts. 3. A certayne man that hadde bene lame from hys byrthe, lying

lying at the gates of the Temple, asked almes of those that went in, and of Peter, who had neither siluer nor golde to giue him, but he gaue him strength to walke on his feete. But these are to be reckened among the sicke persons. Paule the Apostle oftentimes commendeth the poore dwelling at Ierusalem, but they were suche as had bene hurte with many and grieuous iniuries, and had suffered themselues to be spoyled of all their goods for the profession of the Gospell of Christe, (as he declareth Hebr.cap.10.) and at such time as that great famine vnder Claudius Cæsar did oppresse many Prouinces, but especially Iewry: whiche is mentioned Acts.11. Eusebius hist.Eccl.lib.2.cap.8. Tertullian Apolog.cap.39. reporteth that the collections of the faythfull were wont to be bestowed in releeuing the poore, burying the dead, on children and infantes destitute of parents, on men broken with age, on suche as had suffred shipwracke, and if any were set to worke in the mines, or if any were in banishment, or in prison, so that it were in Gods cause, that is, for the profession of Christian religion.

Dioni-

Dionisius the Bysshop at *Corinthum* wry-ting to Soter Bysshop of *Rome* (as witnes-seth Eusebius hist. Eccles. libr. 4. cap. 23.) sayth, that it was the maner of the fayth-full men at Rome from the beginning, to helpe all their brethren with sundrie be-nefites, to lot out for many churches in diuers countreis al things which they vn-derstode they did lacke, to comforte eche mans necessitie by all meanes they could, to minister as nede required to the bre-thren dispersed through the mines. Ther-fore you see, that the Churches haue bene wonte to relæue those which dwelt farre off, and were distant from them long ior-neys, and among them suche as were con-demned to the mines. Acatius the bysshop of *Ameden*, (Socrat. hist. Tripar. li. 11. ca. 16.) was very carefull for the redeeming of captiues in the warre, for whom sainct Ambrose, and after him sainct Augustine were so carefull, that for the deliuerie of them they doubted not to bestow the gol-den vessels of the Church. Possidonius the bishop at *Calanen.* hath lefte this in wry-ting. But Ambrose in his Offices dothe yet recken other which deserue to be pi-

ties.

tied. Age and debilitie (sayth he) must be considered, and sometimes bashfulnesse, which is a tokē of a toward nature, which can not presently get their owne liuing, and yet either in time to come may, or in time past hath. In like maner debilitie of bodie muste spedily be holpen, as also if any man from riches be come to pouertie, and especially not through hys owne fault, but either hath loste that he had by robbers, or proscription, or by vniust accusations. And agayne the same Ambrose in the same worke sayth: Perfect liberalitie is commended by sayth, the cause, the place, the time: first that it worke among them that are of the housholde of faythe. For it is a great fault if any faythful man nede, & thou do not supply his lacke when thou knowest it: if thou knowe him to be without money, and hungrie, and thou fede him not: if he suffer griefe, and thou comfort him not: specially whē he would hide it, and is bashefull to vtter it: if he be conuicted to the imprisoning of hym selfe or his children, or vniustly slaundered, and thou helpe him not: if he be layde in prison, and extreamely dealte with-

withall for some debt, beeing a iuste and honest man, thou arte muche to blame if thou succoure him not. Which wordes are borrowed from him in the *Distinct. 86. Cannon. Consideranda*, and *Cannon. Non satis est.* Finally we finde, that such as applied the scholes to get lerning, especially studēts of the scriptures, whom they call Clerkes, were maynteined by the publike liberalitie, when they were destitute of the helpe of frendes alied to them. Which Sozemenus (Tripart. histo. Lib. 6. Capi. 7.) dothe playnely signifie to haue begunne firste in the tyme of Constantinus the Emperoure, when he saythe, that Iulianus commaunded, that what soeuer the maydes and widdowes which for penurie were relæued among the clerkes, had receiued a little before out of the common liberalitie, according to the appoyntment of Constantinus, should be exacted of them agayne. There are extant also many cannons, & many rescripts of Bysshops, in the which the same is declared: as in the Councell at *Braccara, Can.* 25. in the councell at *Calcedon, Can.* 3. & *de cōsecratione dist* 5. out of ỹ booke of the

fius

fine chapters Cannon, *In omnibus*, also in the Epistle of Gelatius the byshop, to the byshops placed through *Lucania*, *Brucia*, and *Sicilia*. Item to the clarks and people of *Brnnduſium*, out of the which Gratianus hath borrowed much. 12. *Quest. 1. Cano. 4.* and *Cannon. Conceſſu.* Beſides these, the Epistles of Gregorius the first: one to Auguſtine bishop of Cantorburie, the other to Leo byshop of *Carthage*, out of the latter of the which, it is read, 16. *quest. 1. Cano. Adhuc*. Of which matter we haue intreated more at large in our booke of Eccleſiaſticall ſcholes. I might bring more testimonies of euery sorte of pouertie out of the commentaries of ancient writers, but I will ceaſe to do it, ſuppoſing that these are ſufficient to teache vs to iudge whome we ought to relæue, as very poore among the ſundrie degrees of pouertie.

Firſt therfore are commended widdowes and Orphanes. 2. ſtraungers and pilgrimes. 3. diſeaſed people, in which number are the lame, the deafe, the dumbe, the blind, the leapers. &c. 4. Aged people, whiche in dæde do little differ from ſuche as be ſicke, for age it ſelfe (as ſayth one) is a diſeaſe

diſeaſe. 5. Thoſe that are ſpoyled of their goodes for the confeſſion of the truthe of Gods Goſpell, or condemned to the mynes, or baniſhed into ſtraunge Ilandes, or kepte in filthie priſons. 6. Captiues in warre vnder the enimies eſpeciall of the chriſtian religion. 7. They whiche from riches are broughte to pouertie, whether it be by ſhipwracke, or by fyring, or robbing and warlike vprores, or by proſcription or the ſlaunder of their aduerſarie, and by the iniquitie of iudgement, wherby their cauſe hath bene ouerthrowne, or by any ſuche ſodayne caſualtie, ſo that it come not by their owne faulte. To whom we muſte ioyne (according to the opinion of Ambroſe) ſuche as be baſhfull, borne of honeſt parentage, but dare not bewray their pouertie. 8. Yong children giuen to apply honeſt artes, but eſpecially good litterature and Theologie.

But you will ſay, what a company is there reckned to be releaued? Whence ſhall we rayſe the charges, whiche muſte fede ſo many ſortes of men? I would you did vnderſtande, that we haue not reckened thus many ſortes of men in tymes

paſt relæued of the publike liberalitie, to the ende to feare you, and to withdrawe you from this godly purpoſe: but partely that by the worthy examples of the auncient Churches (whoſe ſubſtaunce was yet but very ſmal, and habilitie very ſlender) they myghte excite all men to proſecute this buſineſſe propoſed, partely that euery Citie may knowe howe to viewe what pouertie they maye finde among them to be relæued. For it is certayne that we haue reckned many ſuche as are not nowe to be founde among many people and cities. Therefore we meane, that they onely are to be dëemed worthy of the publike liberalitie, which out of all ſorts that I haue reckened, are preſently to be founde in the Citie. And yet not all ſuch, but thoſe of them onely whiche after diligent ſearche, ſhall be founde to be oppreſſed in dæde with famine and penurie. For there are in euery place many Widowes and Orphanes, there come dayly many ſtraungers, there are many ſicke, lame, blinde, dumme. &c. Many are of riche menne ſodaynly brought to pouertie, many children deſtitute of their

parents

parents ayde, and lefte poꝛe, whom notwithſtanding it is not nædefull by and by to putte in the number of them which can not lyue, excepte they receiue their mayntenaunce of the publike treaſurie. The whiche, howe it ſhoulde be taken, it is behouefull foꝛ vs to explicate moꝛe playnely to the eaſing of the Pariſhes and Cities.

Firſt thereforꝛe among thoſe whiche begge and aſke almes from dooꝛe to dooꝛe, all ſuche as are valiaunt, of what ſexe oꝛ age ſo euer (if, I ſay, they be able of body) they ought to be excluded from the publike liberality. Sée, I beſæch you, howe muche we haue diminiſhed in one wooꝛde, that huge number of thoſe that pꝛofeſſe pouertie. Doubtleſſe if a diligent viewe be taken, of fiue hundꝛed roges wandꝛing euerywhere in ſight, and begging of euery one they mæte, there ſhal ſcarſly two hundꝛed be founde which deſerue in dæde to be pitied. Yet there is great diſcretion to be vſed in that behalfe, and there ought to be pꝛeſent good witneſſes, and among them ſome Phiſitions and Surgeons at the ſearche of their habilitie, healthe and

age of euery one that liues by begging, that no man may afterwarde iustly complayne, that any thing hath bene done otherwise than well. Then must begging be forbidden to all that are sounde and in good state of bodie, yea and to all other whom soeuer. The which thing bycause it will be noueltie, and thought to be harde-dealing, and not onely they which mayntayne themselues in idlenes by other mens sweate, will grudge, but also many of the citizens will complayne that it is great extremitie, to abridge the pouertie of that so long continued and harmlesse trade, to seeke things necessary for this life of well disposed persons (for they haue nothing but that which menne are willing to giue them.) Of either of these sortes of menne, greeuous tragedies mighte easily be raysed in the Citie, therefore we muste preuent this mischiefe on this maner. First the Senate or Parliament of the Magistrates shal diligently intermeddle their authoritie, and calling the multitude togither, shall by a publike Edicte or proclamation, wholly prohibite all begging, for sundrie weigh-

weightie and neceſſarie cauſes, whereof ſome may well be expreſſed in the Edicte or Acte it ſelfe. Conſequently the Preachers, and ſometimes alſo before the publiſhing of the Edict, ſhall with great fayth and grauitie teache that begging, eſpecially of the valiant ſorte, ought worthily to be abrogate: they ſhall declare firſte, that it is a deteſtable ſinne to begge from dore to dore for victualles whyche by his owne labours he were able to prouide, the other beeing due for the true pouertie: they ſhall ſharpely inueigh agaynſt filthie idleneſſe and ſlouth: they ſhall pithily ouerthrow all ſuche cauillations as they vnderſtande to be obiected by malicious & ignorant perſons agaynſt this newe and godly edict. For before we proceede to the vtter prohibiting of begging, we muſte by all meanes prouide, that the people may be rightly inſtructed of the whole matter, and may fully perceiue, howe godly, howe holeſome, howe needefull it is. And herein the ſpeaker hath a wyde fielde opened to him. It is right well knowne, that in the lawe of God, Deut. 15. the Iewes were charged to

forese, that in their common wealthe no begger or nedie person might be found. *Egenus (inquit) seu mendicus non sit inter vos.* Where the Hebrewe worde signifieth one that is so poore, so beggerly or destitute of all things, that he muste nedes craue and aske relefe of other. It seemed also that it mighte redound to the reproch and opprobrie of the name of God, if in that nation, which was so well trained in religion, any should be driuen to begge for pouertie. The Gentiles also in their common wealthes dyd wisely prouide in this behalfe, as appeareth. For Plato his verdicte was, that beggers and idle persons should be expulsed the citie. Valerius Maximus hæresy is witnesse. That the *Massilians* did once forecast, that idle beggers & otherwise vnprofitable, might not come among them, he that hathe readde any approued authours, wyll easily acknowledge. That the moste prudent *Athenians* had a care of the same matter, after whose example it was decreed and commaunded in the Ciuill lawe, that valiaunt beggers shoulde be searched, and be brought in order by seueritie, *Codice, de validis mendi-*

canti-

cantibus, lib. 12. in these words: A fewe being taken of all them, who by vncertayne begging do make a common gayne, let the soundnesse of bodie, and lustinesse of age, be searched in euery one, and lette those which are slouthfull and wretched, without any cause of debility, be vrged, as such as are of a seruile condition, and let some diligent and studious examiner haue authoritie ouer them. And whosoeuer shall bewray, proue & detect such wickednesse, let them be borne oute by the noble men, and the whole inhabitants of the towne or citie: and the maisters may safely haue an action agaynst those, which either helpe to conueigh fugitiues, or giue them counsayle to practise begging. In which lawe you see that begging is not onely simply prohibited, as a thing vnlawfull, but also punyshed and chastised as of affinitie to other wickednesse. Wherefore if nothing else, yet truly the offences & wickednesse which we haue before rehearsed, and at al times, & euery where haue bene obserued in many beggers, (for Chrisost. also in his time cõplaineth, that they were defiled wt innumerable & manifolde euils

in his booke of the prouidence of God. li. 1) ought to leade the magistrate forthwith to prohibite all begging. For it is euident that bothe it may and ought to be done, as well by Gods lawe, as by mans lawe. Moreouer, howe græuous a sinne it is, for one that can worke to wishe to be fed in idlenesse by others sweat, and to snatch the morsell out of the mouthe of suche as be poore in dæde, the Apostle him selfe mentioneth. 2 Thessa 13. when he sayth, that they which doe so, *inordinatè viuunt*, liue inordinately, and do peruert all good order in the ciuill societie, and therefore ought to be compelled to worke: or if they refuse to be obedient, to account them as infidels, and to haue no felowship with them. The Prophet Psal. 128. doth dæme them blessed in dæde, which get their liuing honestly by their owne labour. For thou shalt eate (*inquit*) the labour of thine owne handes, blessed shalt thou be, and it shall go wel with thée. Wherupon Prop. li 2 (of a cõtẽplatiue life) doth wel gather, that he which can maintein himself by his own trauel, ought not to receiue any part of ỹ which is due to the weak & impotent.

And

And we read in the Canon: let them only receyue the releefe of the powre, which are not able to worke. But that goeth more harde, which is borrowed out of Ierome: 12. queſt. 2. Can. Gloria epiſcopi: To receyue or to withholde any parte of that, whiche ought to be beſtowed on the powre, it paſſeth the crueltie of all theues, which is ſpoken in that place of the Byſhops or ſtewards of the Church goods, which neglected the powre: but it may well be vnderſtood generally of all ſuche as do chalenge or vſurpe any of the pouerties goods vniuſtly: and. 1. queſt. 2. Can. Clericos: Item Can. Paſtor. Thoſe clarks are pronounced giltie of ſacriledge, which when they may liue of their owne, yet they receyue of the Church goods, whiche are the powres. But valiant beggers are muche more iuſtlye touched with the ſame ſentence. Furthermore againſt fylthy ydleneſſe how many prety ſayings may be brought out of all ſorts of wrighters? To al mankynde was that law giuē, which doth admitte no exception, immediatly after mans creation: *In ſudore vultus tui veſceris pane tuo*, In ſweat of thy browes ſhalte thou eate thy

bread: Gen. 3 Man is borne to labour, as ý sparks of coles which flie vpward, Iob. 5. Chrisost. lib. pri. of the prouidence of God saith: That mãs nature was created to nothing lesse than idlenesse and rest, and if when we are bent to worke and labour we are not frée from sin, but we sinne stil, to what wickednesse will not oure presumption procéede, if God had ordeyned vs to flowe in delightes, and idlenesse. It is trus that one sayeth: *Omnia mala docuit ocium*, Idlenesse hath taughte vs all wickednesse. But these maye suffise thus slenderly sette forth for the vnskilfull: to witte, that all men maye haue wherwith to confirme bothe themselues, and other, to thynke well of the taking awaye of valiant begging.

It resteth therfore, ý al beggers, which are found sound in body, be driuen by ý authority & edicte of the senate to some handy laboure. They which know no occupation, it is méete they shoulde learne of some artificer. And sith there be so sundrye crafts and occupations, among them many are such as may quickly and easily be learned, & besides may be practised with smal charges.

ges. In husbãdry and tillage, in cloth making, and certaine other, many things may be done of euery one forthwith. Wherfore none may make excuse ý he cannot learne. If he haue a will he cannot but obteyne the skill. If he can any occupation before, it is well, let them be occupied earnestlye in it. And they to whome the businesse of the pouertie is committed shall prouide, that beeing redy to worke they maye alwayes haue something ready for them to do. Let them haue shops, let them haue maisters to hire their worke, either publike or priuate, that they may vtterlye haue no occasion lefte to followe idlenesse. And that the same aduise and counsayle was vsed in the primatiue Churche and societie of the faithfull, it maye be easily gathered, out of the Epistle of Clemente the Pope, vnto James the brother of the Lorde, where hee, speaking of the care to bee hadde for the pouertie, saythe thus: For suche as canne no occupations, seeke ye oute some honest occasions whereby they maye get necessarye victualles. And soone after he addeth: But for the artificers prouide worke.

Thus

Thus muche of valiant beggers, and howe it maye be forſeene, that no ſocietie be burthened with theyr mayntenaunce. Nowe we wil make inquiſition of the reſt of the pouertie in order, but firſt of widowes and orphans. As touching widowes, it is not needful, that al ſhuld haue alowance oute of the collection. For many of them and their children can gayn by doing ſome worke. For they can kemb and carde wool, they can dreſſe and ſcoure woollen cloath, &c. hatchell lyne or flare from the ſhyues, ſpinne, weaue, ſewe ſhirtes, and other linnen garmentes, make needle workes, and doe all kynde of embrawderie, they can make girdles, and all ornaments for children, laces of partie colours, caules for womens haire, little purſes, and ſuche other kynde of apparell and furniture, and can teache the Cittizens daughters the ſame arts. Theſe and many other not vnlike, they are able to do: by whiche meanes ſurely if they will, they may ſhift for themſelues and their children competently. Let there be gotten huſbandes for the yonger widowes, and let them help afterwards as they are able, euery one in their occu-

occupation, and so let them ioyntly earne their mayntenance. So Clemens in the epistle before mencioned sayth: We you in stead of husbands to the widowes, & haue a care for them after an honest sorte, ministring those things whiche are necessarie, yet couple the yonger wyddowes in marriage. Therfore if thus the widowes be restrained from filthie idleneſſe to honeſt labour: or if they be maryed to artificers, it will come to passe, that eyther they shall be competently maynteyned by theyr ownewworke, or shall neede but very smal allowance to help out, or certainly very fewe will desyre anye of the publike liberalitie.

The Churches and congregations in tymes paſte, with greate faythe and diligence, toke vpon them a fatherlye care for orphans, bycause GOD had so commaunded: whyche Clemens in the same Epistle dothe witnesse. Therefore all Orphans, to whom, it shall be found that their parentes, or neere kinsmen, for pouertie, coulde not assigne tutours, ought to be commended to the ouerseers of the poore, who if they be infantes, shall put them

them to nurſe to huſwiues, that are thought meet, and haue no great charge of childꝛen themſelues, who ſhall receyue their wages out of the collection. The lyke regarde ſhall be had of infants that are layd forth in the ſtreates, if none will receyue them. For euen theſe alſo were norifhed and preſerued by the Church of old tyme: whyche wee maye marke in the ſeconde counſell at *Arelae*, holden about the yeare of our Lord. 320. out of the which Cannon 32. it is alledged diſt. 87. Canon. Si expoſitus (where an erroure is paſſed in the ſuperſcription which hath Ex concilio Toletano.) Item out of the councell at *Faſex*, which was celebꝛats, whē Leo ꝑ firſt gouerned ꝑ church of *Rome*, *anno*. 450. Can. 8. Out of ꝑ whiche we may alſo perceiue, ꝑ there were in many cities certain houſes, in which ſuch childꝛé wer honeſtly bꝛought vp: and where ſuche pꝛouiſion is made foꝛ outcaſt childꝛen, thers the ſtewards of the pouertie are deliuered of this care. Neither is this to be let ſlippe, that ſometyme the riche men, eſpecially whiche haue no childꝛen, if they be gently intreated of ſome good men, will not grudge to take ſome

fathers

fatherlesse chylde, and bring hym vp, as many in tymes past were wont to adopte certain, as testifieth often the Ciuile law.

Now those which do remaine, whether they be orphans, or outcast childrē, if they haue no hope of comforte, eyther oute of some common Orphanotrophie, or some ryche mans benignitie, those muste bée so long maynteyned oute of the publike treasurie, till they haue learned some trade to liue by.

Now of strangers or pilgrims, whiche are of two sortes. Some stay long in the Citie, and haue as it were, gotten a dwelling there: other doe but come as wayfarers, and iourney with spéede to some other place. Of these former, it is meete that searche shall bée made, vppon what occasyon they came fyrst to the citie, what they doe, or howe they are presently occupyed, wherof they liue, of their maners, what good vertues, or notorious vyces they are noted to haue. Nowe yf necessitie of warre, or casualtie by fyre, or water, haue forced them to change their abyding, and that they be commended to be of vpright lyfe, and besides are found wil-

willing to labour and trade some occupation, then will we accompte them worthy to be pitied, and so farre forth to be susteined, and borne withall, till they can earne some thing againe to liue by: but if they be not founde suche as we haue now saide, nothing doth prohibite (whiche we knowe the old deuises of commō welthes haue also prescribed) that they may not be thrust out of the cittie, and be sent backe into their owne Countrey, for it is meete that the deuotion be bestowed elsewhere. And to the end it may for hereafter be auoyded, that the Cittie be not burthened with forrein pouertie, the Senate or parliament shall forbid, by an expresse law, that no Cittizen shall hereafter lette out any dwelling house, or harbour any stranger of a forein nation, without knowlege giuen first to the Cōsul, or Maior, or chief officer, howe soeuer he be termed, whome it behoueth to enquire diligently of the estate and conditions of them, which come, so that this way it will proue, that the cōmon welth shal haue fewer pouertie. But vnto the later sort, I meane poore straungers, that iourney any whether, both lodging

ging, and victuals, shalbe courteously grãted lodging in the Hospitals, suche as almost in euery place we see our auncestors haue builded, whereof mencion is often made, both in the Ecclesiasticall histories and in diuers councels: they shall receyue victuals eyther in the same Hospitall, or of some appoynted for the same purpose. It shall not be lawful for them to begge frõ doore to doore. For the which purpose the senate or counsel, shal enioyn som that dwel nére euery gate of the Cittie, to salute the poore wayfarers that come by, to aske them courteously from whence they come, and whether they go: Thẽ by and by they shall signifie vnto thẽ, that begging is forbidden, and therwithal, shall shewe them the way to the Hospitals, or to his house that prouideth for the necessities of straungers. Let vs procéede to diseased persons. Amõg these, bycause some are grieued with curable diseases, some with vncurable, whẽ they are searched, you must take the counsell and aduise of phisitians, and chirurgians, and wisely prouide, that as many as may be healed, maye bée cured as sone as may be conueniently. But such as haue

not any hope to recouer their health, they shall goe to the spittle house, if there be any suche in the citie. If there be none, it is méete to bethynke howe they may bée holpen. The rest which were ioyned with these diseased people, the blynd, the lame, the deafe, the dumbe. &c. doe not all forthwith, if they be sound in other membres, néede the publyke liberalitie. For oftentymes, as much of their strength as is diminished in one member, so muche we sée is recompenced in an other membre. Therfore in wel gouerned common welthes, we oftē sée that both the deaf and the dombe hauing lerned honest occupations, haue wife and childzen, and bring them vp honestly. They which lacke ỹ vse of their féet, with their handes, did carue spones, saltes, little images, and other such things: they sewe garments, with the néedle, pen, and pensyll they did paynte and draw pictures, & what could they not do withtheir hands? They which lackt, or had luxatiōs in their armes, we haue séene them able to worke with their féet, to blow black smiths bellows, or ỹ triers of mettals & founders and in the churches to blowe the organs,

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moreouer to serue for messengers in the Cittie, to do arrants, to carrie letters to other townes and citties, to beare burthēs vpon their shoulders after they were laide on. &c. Neither may the blind be spared, that they may not accostome to do some worke, and to get their victuals with their owne trauell. I knowe some blinde men, whiche being ledde by a child, while they were children to the grammer schole, by continuall hearing haue at length gotten famous learning, and haue afterwarde taught other publiquely with greate commēdation. many also haue bin famous by their writings. Perseualdus Brugensis and before hym Petrus Pontanus, of the same Cittie, Robertus VVancop Scotus doctours of Diuinite, & of late created Archbyshop of *Armacan*, these taught at *Paris*. And who hath not heard of Didymus Alexandrinus, whome all aunciente wrighters doe greately extoll with prayses. Item Hiodorus the Stoicke, is celebrated, who taught in Philosophie worthyly, and bothe played and song to the Harpe, accordyng to the manner of the Pythagorians. Moreouer, I haue seene at *Brugis*,

a colledge dedicate and seruing onlye for the blinde, in whiche many are instructed to play well on pipes, of sundry kinds, on Churche organes or instruments &c. But they which are not capable of suche artes, those wind botoms, and double thréeds for the weauers, make baskets and skepps of osters, or bull rushes &c. or worke at the wine presses, or the hād milles: to be short, there are innumerable whiche makyng a shewe of griefe or debilitie of body, do flée for succoure to begging as to the holy anchor: But if their estate be more néerly examined, they shalbe found to haue no iust cause to begge. He that doth diligently examine how many refuges are offred wherby he may shoon pouertie, shall neuer be able lawfully to pretend extreame necessitie, or that he must néedes begge for hys liuing.

The fourth place we assygned to brokē and aged people. Neither néede all these to be susteyned of the commō collection. Many to their last daye will willingly do one easie worke or other, and are occupied in the lome shopps, or other workehouses. But some that are vtterlye decrepite and crooked

crooked, lette the geron[illegible]omies or houses appointed for the aged cherish such: as by the ordinaunce of the olde church, may be often found, to this day in many cities: of the which much is spoken, *Codice de episcopis & clericis*, some their children, neuews, or nere kinsmen, which are able, shall be commaunded to keepe. Therefore a diligent inquisition beeing made, very fewe shall remayne to be relieued of the collection.

What shall we saye of them, whyche for the profession of the Euangelicall veritie, haue ben spoyled of their goodes, ben condemned to the mynes, ben banished into Ilandes, and imprisoned? It is certain, that as touchyng thys matter, the verye same respecte is not, which was long ago, sith Ethnik magistrates do no more now beare rule in the common wealth. Therefore both seldome and in fewe places, it chaunceth, that any are afflicted for the confession of the Gospell, after the manner of the fyrste Chrystians. Yet, if at any tyme it appeare, that any bee iniuried wrongfullye, and bee endaungered for reprehending vices and superstitions

boldely, or otherwise, for vttering or defendyng the the truthe constantlye, then truely all good menne shall endeuour, that Chryste hereafter maye not complayne, and laye vnto oure charges, that hee in hys members was neglected of vs, and was suffered to lacke all thynges necessarye for thys lyfe. Neyther neede any man to doubt, but that Chryst euen at thys daye is persecuted and crucifyed in manye of hys members. The nygher that the worlde drawethe to an ende, the more cruellye will Antechriste rage agaynst Christes disciples.

Among the Pouertie in the fyrte place wee put the captyues, especially in warres whyche haue ben made agaynste the ennimies of the Christian Religion. But sith oure Kings haue not perpetuall warre wyth the Turkes, or Idolaters, therefore thys burthein of redeemyng captiues is seldome layde vpon vs.

In the seuenthe place, wee reckened men of great riches sodeynly broughte to bee poore, by shypwracke, ouerflowyng of waters, fyre, robbyng, and incursions or hostile inuasions, and other lyke

casu-

casualties. But all these are suche for the moste parte, as wyth a little healpe, and that but for a whyle, by their owne vertue and diligence, they wyll weare it out agayne by little and little, and I may adde, that many tymes they whiche are wealthie, doo liberally of theyr owne accorde, by lendyng them money, or other wayes, succour suche as they knowe are become poore, not by theyr owne default, so long tyll they maye ryse, and recouer agayne.

Otherwhyles, these kynde of menne haue licence from the Magistrate to craue some relefe at euery house: which thinges sythe they bee so, eyther but little, or for no long season these menne shall nede relefe out of the common treasurie of the poore.

Lastly, we added children, giuen to lern good litterature, but especially enclined to the studie of the holy Scriptures, but bicause there are but fewe to be found, in whome there maye be seene any singular hope, eche man can easylye conceyue, that no great charges wyll ryse this way. Admitte that in one meane Citie syre or

seuen maye bée chosen whyche are fitte and apte, I beséeche you what is that?

Therfore it is euident by these things, that almost of an infinite number of men and women, whiche intrude and mingle themselues with the poore, all are not verily néedie and worthie to haue the publyke allowaunce, but that a choyse euen wyth diligence must be had. For yf all the sortes of pouertie were rehersed in order, and thoroughoute euery tryke (as I maye tearme it) or warde, a searche myghte bée made, in suche sorte as I haue nowe expressed, you shall fynde, amonge the valyant beggers none, among wyddowes, and Orphans, sometyme more, sometyme lesse, but neuer any greate number, among the straungers verye fewe, among the dyseased, those onely which are grieued wyth diseases vncurable, wherein the Physitians and Surgeons skyll and arte fayleth: For those that are curable, shall soone be dispatched, and they set againe to worke: among the aged they only that are impotent, and haue no children or other to cherishe them, among suche as are afflicted

ded for the profession of the Gospell, and among the captiues in warre, in some places none, in some very fewe: among those which by sodayne casualtie are cast downe to pouertie, neither often nor for any long season: among children to be sente to schole, truely very few that ought to be mayntained *de publico*, of the generall collection.

Therefore when the viewers or Stewards haue in this sorte once founde out, howe great a number of true pouertie is in the citie, then they shal some coniecture howe great charges is requisite to the accomplishing of this godly deuise. And lest any might complaine, that exhibition doth or may hereafter lacke, and therfore they might cry out that this care for the releefe of the poore muste be caste aside agayne, therefore we will shewe howe sufficient exhibition may be leuied for to beare the charges.

Chapter. 7.

Hovve the money and neceſſarie charges may be collected vvithout any great burthen to the Citizens.

WE vnderſtand that the holy fathers of ỹ firſt church, yea of all ages haue bene very careful to inuẽt how to increaſe the allowance which was by them to be diſtributed to the poꝛe. In the law of Moſes god cõmanded euery one that poſſeſſed lands, vineyards, oꝛ oliue trées, ỹ he ſhuld not reape downe euery coꝛner of his field, noꝛ gather the ſcattred eares of coꝛne, noꝛ the fallen cluſters of grapes, noꝛ the oliues lefte on the boughes after the gathering: but what ſoeuer hereof remayned, ſhoulde be frée foꝛ the poꝛe, the widdowe, and ſtraungers to gleane vp. Leui. 19 23. Deuter. 24. He charged the riche men alſo to lend vnto the poꝛe, as often as their néede required, without oppꝛeſſing oꝛ delaying them, and yet in the meane time they

they mighte take no pledge of them, neither aske agayne that which they had lent importunately, or rigorously. Deu. 24.25, Leut.23. Many other lawes to the same effecte, were ordeyned by almightie God, for the releefe of the poore, which it were to long to recite. In the Actes Apost. euery one that beleeued the Gospell brought their money, which either before they had gotten, or then had receyued for thinges which they solde, vnto the Apostles feete, to be distributed to ech man for his dayly releefe. Acts.4. But we haue shewed before, that example not to serue for euery place, and tyme. That whiche I will nowe vtter, is rather to be approued and followed. At suche tyme as Christe taughte in the temple at Ierusalem, and in the Sinagoges of other Cities, there was placed a cheste. Marke.12. Luke.21. named *Gazophylatium*, into the whiche all men were exhorted to caste some money: by the which money, as reporteth Theophilactus, the officers of the churche, the widowes and pouerty were refreshed. Which Chrisost. seemeth also to affirme, expounding those words Mat.24. *Nō licet*

mittere

mittere in corbonam quia precium ſanguinis eſt It may not be put into the treaſurie, bicauſe it is the price of bloud. The Apoſtle Paule, deſiring to haue the brethren which dwelt at Hieruſalem relieued, appointed in the Church of the *Corinthians*, that euery firſt day of the weeke (or ſome one day in the weeke) euery man ſhoulde put aſide by him ſelfe, and lay vp as God had proſpered him, ſome portion to be afterwards dealt to the poore. 1. Corinth. 16. Tertullianus Apolog. cap. 39. telling the cuſtome of the Churches of his time, in collecting the almes, ſaythe: When we meete in our holy aſſemblies, euery man layeth downe a ſmall portion on the monthly day, or when he will, and if he be able: for no man is compelled, but beſtoweth what he is willing of his owne accorde. *Hæc quaſi depoſita pietatis ſunt*, Theſe are as it were the pledges of deuotion. Moreouer in the ſame chapter he teſtifieth, that the ſupper called Agape, that is, loue, was wont on ſet and appointed dayes to be celebrated at the holy meetinges: and certaynly, as he ſayth, to helpe the poore with that refreſhing: which maner

ner of feasting togither was common in all congregations. But when the *Corinthians* did sone degenerate vnto riottous feasting, it is in that place abrogate by the Apost. 1. Corinth. 11. In processe of tyme vessels, and precious ornaments of golde and siluer were giuen to the Church, whiche if any great necessitie grewe or inuaded, were brought forth by the byshops, and liberally bestowed on the poore moreouer and aboue their ordinarie alowance. For so Cyrillus byshop of Ierusalem (as reporteth Sozemenus Tripart. hist. 5 c. 27) when a dearth was in the Prouince, and the nedie people for necessitie of meate loked for succour of him, as of their byshop, and money there was none to ease their penurie, he toke the vessels and sacred veyles to relæue the peoples necessitie. Moreouer in those times wherin the Princes themselues began to professe the Christian religion, the Churche receyued landes, inclosures, vineyardes, tithes. &c. of the franke liberalitie of noble and welthie men: as witnesse the Ecclesiasticall historyes. Item Chrysostome, Hierome, Augustine, and other in diuers places. For

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the riche men noting the fayth and readi-
nesse of the byshops, and other churche ru-
lers in helping the poore, dyd willingly
commit vnto them the disposing of all the
treasure. And when they had heaped gret
riches togither, they then buylte publike
Almes houses, hospitals, spittles, nour-
series, orphanhouses, houses for the aged,
free scholes, and whatsoeuer suche, first in
the great and populous cities, and then in
the lesse. At length, whether bicause per-
aduenture the Ministers of the churches
began in some places to be slack in the of-
fice of stewardship for the poore, or that in
some places the number of pouerty incre-
sed, and houses of relefe coulde not eche
where be built for them, Cannons were
made in diuers places, & seueral times for
the diuision of the church goods into foure
portions, wherof the first should remayne
to the Byshoppes and elders, the seconde
to the Clerkes and Ministers, the third
to buylde and repayre the Churche edi-
fices, the fourthe to the publike relefe
of the poore. I haue made mention of
these Cannons before.

Finally in suche places as the goodes
would

woulde not reache to foster the poore, many citizens beeing admonished, intreated, & persuaded by the Ministers of the churches, haue bequeathed something by their testaments, many also haue assigned rentes, and yerely pensions, out of their landes, gardens, or houses, as is to bee seene in the writinges, Instrumentes, and Euidence, which are kepte for the same purpose in the Archiues and Treasuries of the sayde Churches and almes houses.

By these meanes chiefly the holy and prudent men assuredly thought, that in euery citie or parishe sufficient mighte be prouided for the poore, and the same trade many ages after was happily obserued as long as the dignitie of the Churche stoode in safetie. Nowe therefore let vs see among the examples of the olde fathers mentioned, what deuises may honestlie bee vsed in thys ours tyme, for to rayse a sufficiente collection for necessarie charges.

1 According to ỹ maner which was vsual among ỹ Iewes, as reporteth Theophilactus, ther might wel be set in euery church cer-

certayn cheſtes or boxes, with an inſcription or note, declaring that it is appointed for the treaſurie of the poore: into which cheſtes euery one may priuily caſte as muche money as he will, and when he will, beeing perſuaded, that it is muche better to lay vp priuily there for the poore without deſire of vayne glory, and ſo that the lefte hande ſhall not knowe what the righte hande doeth, two mytes of copper, or neuer ſo ſmall a peece of money, than to beſtowe certayne groates on them that begge commonly, and at euery doore.

2 Moreouer, nothing letteth, why the ouerſeers of the poore, in the name of all the pouertie committed to them, may not once in a weeke go about to euery citizens houſe, to receiue a ſtipende of euery man, as we ſee the *Corinthians* were admoniſhed by the Apoſtle to do the like.

3 On ſuch dayes as holy aſſemblies are made, and when the people meete al togither at the Church, to the hearing of Gods woords, and the participation of the ſacraments of the miſticall Supper, then the ſayde Officers may well receyue the oblations of the faythful, either going about the

the Churche, or standing in some conuenient place. For seeing now we celebrate no Agapas, that is, feastes of loue, after the olde maner to refreshe the poore, what may better supply the place of them, than a godly distribution of almes, which will no doubt proue as auaylable for the refection of the poore?

And let not the collectours for ỹ poore be slacke or disdayne to do this, sith it is most certen that by this labour they shall do vnto God an acceptable seruice, and a very spirituall worship.

4 And truely to further happily this whole businesse, the willingnesse and endeuour of the Preachers or ministers of the churches themselues will helpe very muche, to witte if they often appoynt to speke of charitie & liberalitie towards the poore in their publike sermõs to the multitude, and often in their priuate exhortations to them, which aske their aduise in doubtful cases. For nothing can more effectually bring to passe, that the Officers themselues may cherefully take paines to gather, and al other with prompt & ready minds to bestow their liberalitie, thã may

the graue & lerned sermõs of ỳ preachers.

5 The Ministers also of the church shal helpe not a little, if sometimes out of the open pulpit, and somtimes priuatly, when they are called to such as be sick or otherwise, they aduertise them, that suche as be minded to make their willes, doe bequeath some thing to the nedy people, but especially when their heires that succede them, haue no great nede, or are perhaps vnworthy, or ingrat, or prodigal wasters.

6 Furthermore, in some places often times are ordeined funeral pompes, with great charges, to prouoke mourning, or rather for ostentation, especially at the buriall of some noble or riche Citizen. But who is so grosse witted, which vnderstandeth not that it woulde be muche more commendable, and more acceptable before God, if this maner of superfluous funerall charges were abridged, and bestowed on the naked members of Chryst, which almost al the yere do mourne & languish for lack of releefe? It is certayn that those sumptuous burials & exequies were vtterly vnknowne to the old Christians. We read in dede in certein writers that

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there were offrings and oblations made, to be distributed to the poore, but of any gorgious preparation or magnifical pomp we do not read.

7 And if after the same maner certayn prodigious and vnnecessarie ornamēts of the churches, such as we see in many places of pictures, tables, of signes, and many other things, were solde, when the necessitie of the poore required, who woulde thinke it any sinne, sithe in tymes past so godly Church rulers and bishops doubted not in suche necessitie to alienate euen the necessarie vessels?

8 Neither dothe any thing hinder, but that there may honestly & ciuilly enquirie be made as touching the church goods, that they may vnderstande, whether the fourth part therof do go to the relief of the poore, according to the prescript of the Cannons. And in some places the Churches haue hadde of long continuaunce a treasurie for the poore, into the which not onely the Almes here and there dayly collected, but also the money that ryseth of yerely rentes, and annuall pensions is layde vppe. But this is often founde to bee so

muche, that if all the goods of the sayde church were valued, they woulde amount to be more than the fourth parte. Therefore where there is so riche a treasurie, the Magistrates haue good cause to endeuour to bring to passe, that thereby due relefe may bee prouided for the poore. Agayne in some places the fourth parte of the Churche goods is sente to the almes houses, but what becommeth of it? There are to bee seene Almes houses, but no poore people are admitted vnto them, or percase onely two, or three, or foure well fatted hogges of Epicures hearde, whiche scarsly can beare the ballace of their paunches for fatnesse, muste be admitted in thether. There are which we terme Hospitals, but none cõmes at them, they are shutte vp from all straungers. There are Spittles, and houses for the aged, but they are only frequented with sound & strong, and people of lusty yeres, and such as take their pleasure there: so mighte we say of the rest. Therefore herein also some diligent laboure woulde be employed, that accordyng to the Cannons of dyuers Councels, (which for breuitie I cease to recken)

recken, and the lawes of the Emperours, wherof some are extant, Codice de Episcopis & Clericis, other are extant in Nouellis, that all the Stewards of those places should yéeld an account of the receipts and expences, either to the byshops, or their substitutes, or before some other Magistrates, and let them all take aduise for the laying oute of the goods for the vse of the poore, for whose sake, eche man knoweth they were first collected. Neither is there any doubt, but that by this meanes euen abundaunce of substaunce may be gathered for the mayntenaunce of the poore.

9 After all these, if so be that in some certayn place of the citie on set dayes, or some appoynted season of the yere, meat, drinke, garments, fewell, or money be vsually distributed, and peraduenture to a few, and a certayn number chosen: none may lawfully mislike if the same be committed to be disposed by the common ouerseers of the poore, or at the least, that they may haue libertie to nominate, to what poore, or how muche they thinke meete to be distributed. All the whiche things doe

agrée very well with the orders of the olde Churche, as we could, if it were néedfull, more fully teache.

10 It were no harde matter to inuent many such fitte meanes to rayse the charges, especially at suche times as there is greate dearthe of yearely prouision, and there seemeth to be extreme necessitie. For then it may be ordeyned, and the Preachers them selues for good causes shall speake of suche constitutions, and shall exhorte the people to graunt vnto them, to wit, that in bargayning, especially in bying and selling, hyring and letting, and in making of mariages, the people shall vse to giue somewhat better earnest pennies than before, and shall forthwith put the same into the pouerties chest or bore, stãding ready in the Church. Whosoeuer do take on them any publike office or function, of their frée will shall bestowe some thing to the poore mens bore, as wishing therby of almightie God a ioyful successe. Moreouer when a mulcte or fine is by the Magistrates set on any mans head for an offence cõmitted, to be payde either to the Prince or the common wealth, those men

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also may well be enioyned to pay some portion of money to the poore. And I suppose no godly or reasonable man will denie, that these are very fitte meanes to encrease the fruites of godlynesse, and yet they swarue nothing from the rule of equitie, nor are not very greeuous or burthenous. Besides these, in certayne Cities oftentymes there are made publike playes and games, (I say not annexed otherwhyles with filthinesse or other sins, for which cause christian bashfulnesse and sobrietie doth worthily detest them) banquets, and feasts of brotherheods and colledges, & very many other of that sorte, on the which great sums of money are yerely wasted. But how much better were it, ỹ certen of these were vtterly abolished, or at the least were kept more moderatly, that ỹ superfluous charges might be cõuerted to the necessities of ỹ poore? A certen mã named Antisseus ỹ citie næding a peece of money to be in a readinesse, what soeuer might happen, when the feastes of Bacchus were at hande, which the citizens were wont euery yere to celebrate sumptuously, and with greate charges,

he coũseled them to omit them, and to lay vp the money which should haue ben consumed on them. The *Lacedemonians*, whē the *Samians* minding to depart, requested money of them towardes their iourney, they decréd by publike aduise, that they, their seruaunts, and cattel should fast one day: and that which euery man shoulde haue spente, should be payde to the *Samians*. Moreouer ẏ *Ephesians* lacking money made a law sodenly, ẏ womẽ should after that wear no gold, and should either giue, or at the least lende that which they had at that present, to the citie. (these things are reported by Aristotle Oeconomico. lib. 2.) By these meanes great summes of money were collected in shorte time. Why may we not therfore in like maner, especially by making certayne lawes to abridge excessiue charges, and to call men to sobrietie and modestie, attayne sufficient for the mayntenaunce of the pore: But truely I am not wyse to stay in these things. It is certayn that sundrie meanes may be inuented, as place and time requireth, and we thoughte good onely to touche the thing, that we might giue you occa-

occasion to deuise suche as shal be thought méete for your cities and parishes.

Truly he is greatly deceyued in my opinion, whiche feareth, that to so godly a purpose exhibition will be wantyng. To thinke that things necessarie for the maintenance of the poore can not be gotten, it is the opinion of a man that playnely distrusteth of the goodnesse bothe of god and man. Verily the worldly wise and couetous men, musyng of their houshold prouision, are wonte thus doubtfully to reason: Whence shall we haue to mayntayne this or that thing: and with such vaine cares the wretches tormét themselues. But oftentymes these men are deceyued, and are frustrate of their hope, and whyle hauing all thyngs, they can neuer be saciate, sometymes they fall into desperation.

Contrarywise the godly, although at the beginning of the yeare, or the month, they do not foresée how they shall get their necessarie charges, yet when the yeare, or the monthe is ended, they acknowledge that they haue receiued liberally al things which they néeded, and greately maruell, and giue God thankes. But so it is truly,

only God fædeth euery one alyke, yet all doe not consider it alyke. Therfore let vs put our trust in God, and there is no dout but that he will by all meanes further our godly enterprises.

Chapter. 8.

Howe the almes oughte ryghtly, and according to the rule of equitie to bee parted among the poore.

IT resteth that wée adde some thing of the ryghte distribution of the almes. And verily this is a laboursome charge. For after once the true pouertie are discouered from the counterfaites, and the certayne number of those whiche must be relæued of the common charitie knowne, then it behoueth wysely to foresæ howe to euery one of the poore according to theyr condition, sexe, age, strength, nœde, health or sickneſſe, the labour which they do, and the gayn that ryseth to them of their labours: to some bread and meate, & other victuals,

to

to other linnen or woollen clothe, to other fuel, to other money, to other dwellings, & other things necessary for this life, may be distributed, that none may appeare to be contemned nor neglected, that none maye haue iust cause to complayne, although to say the truth, all pouertie (almost) are naturally wrangling, grudging & disdainful. The apostle. 2. Cor. 8. warneth al the godly to studie to releeue the need of the poore, hauing a regard to their owne abilitie, or to an equalitie: Howe muche more then shall they to whom the case of the pouertie is committed, diligently labour in this, that in so great a companie and diuersitie of pouertie, they maye parte the Almes and collection, according to an equalitie, and euen a Geometricall proportion. For therefore dothe the apostle in that place so greatly commende the fayth, diligence, and discretion of those three men whome he sente to *Corinthum* to receyue the almes, so that he doubteth not in the ende, to call them the Embassadoures of the Churche for the glorye of Christe.

It serueth to the same purpose, that in the Acts. 6. chap. the deacons are described to be

to be men of tryed honestie, full of the holy ghoste, and of wisedome. Therefore in the councell holden at *Thurona*, in the Empire of Carolus Magnus, Can. 10. ¶. 11. the Bishops are commaunded to dispose the Churche goodes to the poore with great circumspection, and as they sawe eche one had nede. But what shoulde I nede to bring many decrées of this matter, sith experience playnly teacheth vs, that greate discretion is required to be in those men, whiche shall order the allowaunce of so manye poore, accordyng to an equalitie? And notwythstanding, in that Chapiter where wee spake of serchyng and viewing the poore, wee haue expressed not a fewe thyngs fytte for this purpose: yet that they to whome thys charge is publykely committed, maye execute their office outwardly, it séemeth good vnto mée, to adde and annexe certayne cautions, whereof some are generall, and muste continually bee vsed towardes all the pouertie: but other are fytte for some one sorte or other. Lette this therefore be the fyrste preuiso.

The ouerseers of the poore, shall once euery

euery weeke, on a sette day, and the same to be thoughte moste conueniente, visite the cottages of all the poore, whyche are knowne verily to haue nede, and examining the lack of euery housholde, the multitude or fewnesse of chyldren which are in them, the health, strength, labour, arte, gayne, and suche other things incident to euery person, shall only distribute without any rygoure or sharpenesse eyther of voyce, or countenaunce, so muche as they thynke nedefull. Thys weekely viewe wyll bring to passe, that the whole estate of the poore shall dayely more and more be knowne to the ouersears, and not only their nede, but also their modestie, sayethe, honestie, and what soeuer vertues or vices remayne in them.

If any of the pouertie be so vndiscrete, that whatsoeuer money they receiue, they are not ashamed straight waye to waste and consume it prinily with quaffing, or like vnhoneste meanes, it shall be beste to giue them no money at all, sith it is vnto them as a baite or instrument of wickednesse, but according to the proportion of their money allowance, it shall be prouided,

ded, that they may haue after a certayne waight or measure for euery day, frō one place bread, from an other meate, from the thyrd drinke, and from other places other things necessary, hauing a bill or tallie giuen them for the prouision of euery thing, and what soeuer these do receyue in that sort, would be paide and discharged euery weeke for sundrye causes. Let vs adde this also: it is necessarye that these kind of mē or women be sharply admonished to repent, and amend, otherwise that they shall be sure not to escape the rod of correction or goe vnpunished.

3 That which we haue nowe sayde of ỹ prodigall and such as sinne maliciously, we woulde haue also to be vnderstood of such as are out of measure negligent and careless of all things, not knowing howe to vse that which they get, or is giuē them, and vtterly ignorant howe to guyde theyr householde: it is certayne that many suche are often to be found. If any do lacke the counsell of other, these truly ought most of all to be vnder ouersēers & tutors as are childrē. Therfore ỹ officers shal neuer suffer any money to come in their fingering.

4 It

4 It is also warelye to bē prouided, that as many as are susteyned by the common almes (excepte the sicke and sæble) alwayes may haue some worke to occupy them, which we shewed before was nædfull. Wherfore before either occasion to worke or to gayne do faile them, it behoueth the ouersæers to goe vnto and to admonish euery riche Cittizen, & sometimes also the common counsell, and senate, that they procure them some work, either priuate or publike: as to dresse the walles of the cittie, to clense the trenches, or ditches, to repayre or amende the publique edifices which are curiouse, and suche lyke.

5 Furthermore once euery wæke, or where there is a great multitude, twice, the vewers or stewardes shall sitte togither in certayn houses in some publike chamber or place fitte for the state and countenaunce of a counsell, to heare and vnderstande the causes, quarels, requests, and suites of the poore, which by their cōsell and ayde they shall endeuoure so to frame and set in order, that they suffer no man to depart out of their presence sadde, or miscontented. For otherwhiles some sodein

sodein casualtie maketh, that a poore man hath more nede than he had ere while: one hath some of his household lying sick: another hath a wife traueling in child birth or deliuered, lacking cherishment: another lacketh some handy worke wherof he was wont to be occupied & gaine some thing: in fine, this man is in debte to the Phisition, another to the chirurgian, another to the midwife, &c. Wherfore all these must be heard courteously and be releeued as farre as the substance of ỹ treasurie wil permit. In like manner if any be founde to abuse the publique allowance, to leese the money whiche they receyue at game, or to waste it at bibbing, to pamper themselues in idlenesse without cause, or to refuse to worke, to rage cruelly at home with hys wife and children, or to rayle and often moue dissention among the neighboures: the ouerseers shall call for thē, to the same place, and shall seuerely rebuke them in ỹ presence of all that sit there, shal warne them to amend and returne into the right way, and otherwhiles shall depriue them for a space, of some part of the allowance, which they were wont to receyue. Prouided

ded alway, that in the meane tyme it shal be lauful for the ministers of the churche, the Senators, yea and for euery citizen, to come to this session or court of ỹ viewers as often as it lyketh them, and not only to marke with what discretion, integritie, and trust, the viewers speake, and do echo thig: but also if they think any thing worthy to be ordeined or changed, aperteining to the commoditie of any of the pouertie priuatly, or to the vtilitie of the whole businesse, they may modestly and gently declare it, wherof the vewers themselues at their discretion, may afterwardes deliberate and define, or if the matter so require may referre it to the Senate and churche rulers, to the ende that beyng honest and profytable, it may haply be finished by publyke authoritie.

These cautions are generall: now we will adde certaine that are speciall to the sundrye sortes of pouertie. But because wee haue explicate manye things belonging hereto in the place where wee entreated of searchyng and discernynge of the pouertie, therefore wee wyll here be more briefe.

6 As touching widdowes, especially the yonger sort, the vewers shall narowly examine, whether they lyue in good name, chastely, and sobrely. If any lyue otherwyse, those they shall rebuke seuerely in the open session, wherof we haue spoken, and not without deserte also shall spoyle them of the benefite of the almes for a season. Whiche thing is therefore expedient to be done, fyrste to make them abhorre and be aferde to sinne, and if any haue sinned, to make them repente: and also that the ryche menne maye not complayne, that their liberalitie is euill bestowed, and reporte that harlots and all naughtypacks are mayntayned by the publique almes.

7 The vewers shall oftentimes carefully enquire of Orphantes and suche children, with whome and howe they are brought vppe and instructed. The whiche thing that they may the more diligentlye perfourme, it shall not greue them some times at some sette time of the yeare, to vewe one while the scholes, an other while the craftes mens shops to whome the orphants were sent to learne, that

that they may iudge of their profiting or corruption, and prouide betymes howe to remedy those, which haue bin neglected or are of themselues slowe and dull.

8 Moreouer the hewers must vnderstande, that it apperteyneth to their office with all diligence to mainteyne or to further the causes, as well of the widowes as Orphantes, if they haue any matter to be pleaded in the place of iudgement before the Iudges, beseeching the ministers of the Churche to entreate the lawyers to healpe to maynteyne the cause, the Iudges to be fauorable according to the commaundement of God: the whiche office the Byshops did once take vppon them, at suche time as they were the general tutors and ouerseers of al ỹ pouertie, as witnesse sundrye Cānons repeated in diuers councels, and namely, Can. 12. of the councell of *Matisphon* the 2. which was holdē about the yeare. 580. Item certayne rescripts of byshops are extant to the same effect: Distinct. 87. Can. *licet omnibus*, and in the three other that folow. And for this cause especially were ỹ cells and consistories in times past graūted to the byshops.

And fyrſte for a certaintie, they did heare in them the cauſes of the miniſters of the churche, if at any tyme any ſuche matter dyd riſe among them as ought to be referred to the biſhops: next they diſcided matters, as touching the Churche goodes and poſſeſſions, as letting of lands, the accountes of the vintage, & haruеſt, buying and ſellyng of fruites and prouiſion of the hoſpitals, with the whiche manner of buſyneſſe, Chryſoſtome Homil. in Matth. 86. complayneth, that he was greatly hindered. Thirdly, they vnderſtode the cauſes and quarels of the poore, whiche were ſuſtred by the churche, and toke vpon them to maynteyne or ende them as they could. But where as Saint Auguſtine, and perhaps ſome other biſhops, did ſometymes permit the controuerſies of other menne, which are called ſecular to be broughte before them, to the ende that eyther they myght breake of the controuerſies, or be ſome meanes to take them awaye: we muſt thinke that was extraordinarie, and that they did it, rather to cutte off contentions quickely and ſeuingly, than to prolong them after the maner of the courtes.

Which

Whiche is euidently to bée gathered out of the verie wordes of Augustine, Libr. de opere monachorum cap. 29. when hée sayeth. That hée is not bounde to thole troubles by the precepte of the Apostle 1. Corin. 6. but that hée toke that paynes with the comforte of the Lorde, with the hope of eternall lyfe, and that he myghte bryng forth fruite thorough the pacience, bicause there wanted some other to sustayn that labour.

Hereby I trust it may be known from whence wée haue borrowed the reasons and groundes of our counsell, when wée persuade the viewers of the pouertie, to sit togither once euerye wéeke in some open place to vnderstande the causes and quarels of the poore: sothely herein wée would haue them to perfourme the worthie office of the auncient bishops.

9 We haue spokē inough before of such as coms as wayfarers. Only it lyketh vs to note this: that it is good somtimes to enquire, whether they haue about them any letters to testifie of what behauior they be &c. Which is especially expediēt to be done then, when any publike danger eyther of

warrs, or sedition, or treason is feared.

10 Those whom the vewers shal vnderstand to be very sick, they shall prouide, ỹ they may be led or trãsferred forthwith to the publike spittles, if there be any in the town or citie, where such conuenient & discrete lodgyng, the attendance of women, the counsel of Physitians shal be so redily prepared, that euery one shall fele theyr present comforte and releefe, and shall beholde euery one about them very carefull for their health and recouerie. But being recouered, lette him not tarie long there, neyther let him colour his slouth with a counterfait disease. But in suche places as there is no spittle, there the viewers shal prouide, that the diseased lying in their owne houses, may with al charitie be looked vnto, eyther of their owne wyues, or other women, but especially widows wel stricken in age. And that al things that the poore haue need of, may ỹ better be prouided, it behoueth especially in great cities, that a stipend be appointed of the common bore, to a physition, an apothecarie, a chirurgian, a barber, a midwife, and women to giue attendance, &c.

11 The

11 The Vewers do vnderstand, that it is a parte of their office, to send the aged persons that haue neede to be cherished in the gerontocomies or houses appointed for the aged, or to procure otherwise, that they may receyue in tyme all things necessarie for this life, for they only do thoroughly vnderstande the state of euery of the pouertie.

12 We may well vse the same rule towarde them, which are from riches brought to pouertie, if they come to vs from other places, which we sayd was to be vsed towardes strangers wayfarers. For it is expedient for many causes to exact of them publike letters, by the whiche they may be credited for the reporte of theyr misfortune, whiche did befall them.

But there needeth a singular prudence to search out those citizens, whiche being borne of honeste parentage, dare not for shame bewraye their lacke: suche as are often to be found in the citie, and many of them deseruing no blame, whom without great sin we may not let passe, so long till either they perish with famine, or for necessitie be prouoked to do some wicked act.

Therefore where any suche is suspected, the viewers without delaye, shall sende for their neyghbors, or some that are nere in kinred to them, or their creditourss, of whom they haue marked, that they dayly haue receyued some things, but neuer paying any mony, of whom they shal narowly enquire of all their whole estate.

And for these mens sakes, the preachers shal otherwhiles signifie out of the pulpit that this is the godly desire of the vewers, that if there be any shamefast or bashefull pouertie, that they will not hencefoorth doubt priuily to vtter their lacke to any of the worshipfull ministers of the Churche, or to what trustie frend they please, which may make report after to the viewers. Moreouer, the viewers hauyng intelligence of the matter, shall endeuour, that suche as are priuily oppressed with lacke, may priuily be relæued: Neyther shall it græue the viewers themselues to visyte sometymes the houses of those Cyttyzens, not as to distribute Almes, but vnder pretence to doe some other busyneße: For as muche as they blushe to aske any thyng openly, so much ought the viewers

viewers blushe to giue any thing to them openly.

But who is able to comprehend in wordes al things which might be here heaped togither for good causes? For there are many craftie and subtill pouertie, who studie onely howe to deceyue, and by all meanes to begyle other, and to wrest an almes from eche man. But when we set forth these things, suche as they be, we are persuaded, that plentifull occasion is giuen howe to inuent many other fitte for this businesse. Neither can these, to say the truthe, be so exactly once discussed, but that it is needefull daily to meditate newe deuises, according to the diuersitie of places, times, and persons. Finally, the very vse of things, and the continuall practise of the businesse, dothe teache by little and little these things, which none is able before to prouide or explicate in wordes. But none can iustly by any meanes disalowe this diligence in serching. True it is that Chrysostome hath set forth an Homilie, *de non scrutandis curiose pauperibus*, that the pouertie ought not curiously be searched. But Chrysostome framed his Oration to

mollifie the hearts of certayne couetous men, which pretended a search to the end they might giue nothing at all, we haue propounded a searche, not that we might not giue any thing, but ỹ whatsoeuer we haue once decreed to giue, we might giue it well, and on such as haue neede in deede.

Chapter. 9.

Of the examination of the credite and dexteritie of the Stewards, and of the maintenance of their auctoritie.

PEraduenture it greeueth some, that they muste put other men in truste with their almes, & that it muste be in other mens hands to dispose it. They wil reason that the benefite of the rewarde is loste, when it is bestowed by an other. To the which effecte they bring something outs of Chrysostome, who in a certayn Homilie to the people. Tomo. 6. counsayleth all men rather to execute them selues the dispensation of their owne substaunce, than

than to committe it to the Church rulers. And that they may seme for more reasonable causes to be moued thereto, they beginne to doubte of the credite of the very Stewardes or Wiewers, as thoughe they might iustly doubt whether they doe order all thinges trustylie or not. And besides, if there be any suche things as are apte to bring the godly Stewardes into suspition and discredite, those these men dispitefully itterate, and packe togither. And truely a man may chaunce to heare suche complayntes, not onely of the riche men: but otherwhyles of the foolishe and doting pouertie. But wee wyll stoppe their mouthes with iuste and strong reasons, that the authoritie of the stewardes may remayne inuiolate. Firste, no man forbiddeth thee whosoeuer thou bee, but that thou mayest with thine owne handes deale almes vnto the pouertie, keping them selues at home, or also caste into the cheste placed in the church, as often as thou wilt, and as much as the holy ghoste, or thy good deuotion doth bid thee to bestow. For not the liberalitie it selfe, but the vnseemely maner of bestowing the almes,

but

but the calling of flocks to thy doore, whiche is full of ostentation (which Chryste also reproueth in the proude Pharisies, who at the dealing of their almes blewe a trumpet or horne to call the poore togither) but the shamefull concourse of beggers is prohibited. And all men ought to be persuaded, that almes giuing is always a good worke, and well bestowed, so that it shal haue the reward of almightie God, as farrefoorth as it is expended with a chéerfull heart, and in the name of Christ. But so farre is Chrysostome from misliking, that a man should put other in trust to dispose his liberalitie, that euē in playn words he commendeth, and straightway in the same Homilie pronounceth al those worthy to be well rewarded, which with good intent minister other mens almes to the poore, as the holy scriptures witnesse that Steuen did. But this especially dothe that blessed father go about in that place. He exhorteth, driueth, and pricketh forwarde those, which are alwayes flowe to do well, and are wonte neuer to giue any thing to the poore, before they flocke vnto their doores, with great hurlieburlie and impor-

importunate and loude petitions & cryes. Those holdefastes woulde Chrysostome haue awaked from their olde wont of couetousnesse and auarice, that they should not stay till they were prouoked by other which should knocke at their gates: but that they shoulde of their owne accorde runne, euen to the waste wildernesse, and search in euery place, on whom they may bestowe their liberalitie as they oughte. Moreouer Chrysostome meaneth, that euery one that will deale almes, muste warely prouide that he do it priuily, without gazers on, or witnesses, and if it might be, his owne hands not knowing it, according to the counsell of our sauiour Christ.

1 What should make vs I beseche you, so greatly to be grieued about the credite of the Stewardes? If suche men be chosen to this Stewardship, as before we declared there ought, then all occasion to cauill or murmure is cleane taken away.

2 At suche time as the Gospel beganne first to be preached by the Apostle, al that beleeued at Jerusalem, did lay downe the price of those things which they solde, at the Apostles feete, to be distributed to ech man

man according to their necessitie, neither did any man then conceiue a sinister opinion of the Apostles.

3 Not long after the Apostles and the whole multitude did commit that office of distribution to seuen Deacons: but it was neuer herd, that any euer brought an actiõ against them of yll ordring of the almes.

4 How greatly is the simplicitie and true dealing of them to be commended, which abiding at *Corinthum* in *Asia*, at *Rome* in *Europe*, and dispersed eche where in *Achaia*, *Macedonia*, and *Galacia*, did not stick to credite Paule the Apostle, and his disciples with all the money that they had gathered togither, and yet (as it appeared) they did then scarsely knowe of what nation or what conditioned men they were, who also carried it far off to be bestowed on the brethren which were vnknowne. How many things might here haue occurred, whereby wicked men might haue taken occasion to slaunder?

5 Do we not see that kinges, princes, common wealths in euery place haue many officers, named questors or treasurers, to whom greater matters are committed: yet

yet in the meane while we seldome heare of any among them deprehended for not ordering all things with great fidelitie.

6 Why then may not we in like maner promise our selues al honestie in the viewers or stewards of our pouertie: especially sith there are alwais some to be foūd, whose credite hath bene tried in other weightie affaires, and who also do vnderstande, and haue the same alway before their eyes, that they doe not mans businesse, but Gods.

7 What nede I forwarne þ there may be such an order for rēdring of accoūt, both of receits and expenses be propounded in euery citie, that by it it may be sufficiently foreseene, that none may priuily conuey or waste vnthriftily the least thing that is? For it may well be appoynted. First that the viewers, or collectors, or stewards. &c. of euery parish may recken with or before the foure chief ouerseers (such as we sayd before ought to be chosen in large cities) & giue an account how much they haue layd vp, or how much they haue taken out, and this musse be done in a publike or open place, whether as well the pouertie, which

which take relefe, as the riche which bestowe it may haue free accesse, that they may obserue eche thing, and search whether any faulte hath bene committed by the negligence of the Wewers in their administration, or dispensation: in like sort twice in a yere in the presence of the Ministers of the Church, and the whole Senate, and other Magistrates besides, if it please them, sitting by: yea and whosoeuer else desire to be present, the summes collected and layde forth euery monthe, shall be recited out of the counte bookes. And this truely, not onely that all men may haue better intelligence of the credite of the stewards, but also of the whole busines touching the pouertie, and if the matter so require, profitable deliberations and consultations may there be had. For in suche like meetings of wise men, it oughte to be free for eche man to vtter what soeuer he shall thinke profitable for this holy institution, and to leaue it to be discussed. And that they to whome thys charge, either in ỹ churches, or almes houses, were once wont after this maner to render an account of receites & expences,

one

one while before the byshops and elders, an other whyle before other rulers and Magistrates, it may partly be clerly vnderstode out of diuers Cannons, as Cannon *de Xenodochijs, de religiosis domibus*, of hospitals & religious houses. Item at the counsell of *Aquisgrane*, Cannon. 141. and partly out of the ciuill lawe, but especially lib. 1. Codicis, titulo de episcopis & clericis, in the title of byshops and clerks. But in the meane seson, while the account of the charges truly cast, to wit, with the names of those that giue, & those that take. Item the summe expended or layde forth, with the day and monthe, and suche vsuall circumstances, alwayes diligently noted: and further bookes whiche conteyne the same thinges worde for worde, are layde opē before the Magistrates, that they may see and read euery thing with their owne eyes, whan (I say) these things are openly rehearsed in the publike session, it is expedient, that the names of al those whiche did giue the almes, or do receyue the almes, be kept silent, and not named, and that partly least the rich men, which haue peraduenture contributed often and libe-

rally, while they often heare their names openly expressed, they take occasion to ware proud, & to glory, and so they lese the reward of their liberality with God: partly least the poore, especially such as are of a bashful & ingenious disposition, do interprete ỳ they are after a sort openly put to shame, & that that often cõmemoration of the benefites receiued, is (as it is sayde in the Comedie) a certen priuie exprobratiõ or casting in the tæthe. Although in this behalfe aswel the magistrates, as the viewers shall determine as they thinke profitable, as place and tyme requireth. For we doe not speake these things as making a lawe, but wee propounde them to bee thoughte vppon, and examined as gentle admonitions.

But when by this meanes the credite of the viewers them selues in their office and administration is inough and sufficiently examined and tryed in all respectes, surely all men conceyue, that we may not lightely beleeue those slaunderers, which studie to accuse them of negligence or false dealing. I knowe not howe it happeneth, but so it is, that they are alway

subiect

subiecte to enuy and slaunder, that are occupied in any publike affayres, especially if it be in the disposing of money, and matters of charges, and the powre, if there be any other, will be sure alwayes to complayne, they alwayes sharpen their téethe to backbite and slaunder. But it behoueth all good men to remember, that he which admitteth slanderers and accusers, heareth but the one parte onely: but he that desireth to knowe the truth more fully, it is néedefull that he heare two parts, to witte, that also whiche is slaundered. Therefore good men will not eastly harken to accusers, though many conspire and speake all to the same effecte: but they will iudge that whiche is in déede, to wit, that they cloake the truthe with lyes, and that a peruerse and malicious affection, not right reason hath the maistrie ouer them. And those also them selues, which are vniustly accused, when their conscience beareth thē witnesse that they haue dealte vprightly, shall not estéeme all those barkers reprochfull wordes priuie or aperte, not the value of one doddkin: but shall rather make accounte that

no man can possibly satisfie or please euery man, and say with Epammundas the Theban, that it is the token of magnanimitie or stoutnesse to contemne euill reportes, and as sayth Antisthenes, it is a princely thing when thou doest well to be euill spoken of. Wherefore when in the citie any are founde despitefully to slaunder those, to whom the charge of the pouertie is committed, it greatly behoueth the Senate or Magistrates to represse thē betimes, and otherwhiles to punishe them more seuerelie: and that truely not onely least they should infect other mens minds with their venyme, but also least those godly men, whose good name is falsly empaired, being weary, & perhaps also tyred with encomberaunces, to cast from them the office of the ouersight of the poore, & so the whole businesse begon with ioyful successe, shal vnluckely be interrupted, which thing were not only greatly to be lamented, but also were to shameful. Yet truely except that matter be somtimes aduisedly loked vnto by ỹ magistrates, it can hardly be, that the dignitie, estimation, & authoritie of ỹ viewers can safely be preserued.

Yores.

Moreouer we are admonished by the occasion of these words, to adde in the latter end, how both it may & ought to be prouided, that this trade of relæuing the poore, wherſoeuer it is once well determined, may there be ratified and established for euer after.

Chapter. 10.

By vvhat meanes it may be prouided, that the order for releeuing the poore once vvell begun, may not afterwarde easily be broken off.

THis businesse wherof we entreate is full of difficultie. For it requireth great charges, it nædeth the counsell & ayde of many & diuers degrées of mẽ, and on the one side the Ministers of the Church, on the other side the Magistrates gouerning the cõmon welth, then the stewards, after them the citizens, especially the welthiest, last of al, almost innumerable pouertie lacking the publike relæfe, al these (I say) do chalenge a place, and to

play a parte in this worthy acte of deuotion and charitie. Wherefore it can not be, but that many discommodities and lettes doe often occurre, some in the entraunce and first beginning, other in the processe and when we are entred, whereby it is a harde matter, first to bring in any certen order for the releefe of the poore: but to retayne, and constantly to vpholde it when it is begun, truly that is very laborsome, and more troublesome than can be credited: yet what soeuer impediments do crosse vs, it is needful that al they which inhabite the same citie, do ioyntly labour with their powers gathered togither, that they shamefully starte not backe at any time from their moste holy, and to the weale publike moste profitable purpose. For the which cause it shall be expedient, that all and singular these degrees of men do meditate some godly reasons, and haue them alwayes in readinesse, wherewith they shall excite them selues incessantly to mainteine so decent an institution, and according to their duetie lay to their helping hands.

Al Magistrates therfore as true fathers

of

of their countrey, that is, of al the citizens, but especially as tutors & gardians of the poore, shal with great prouidence preuent, least any thing euer happen whiche may hinder their purposed intente: or if any thing happen, forthwith to resiste and remoue it. Whereunto that they may bee the more emboldened, they shall not sticke to binde, and (as I may speake) adiure them selues with a certaine godly conspiracie, that they will rather enioyne them selues some great fine, and sustayne great charges, than suffer this holesome ordinance to be weakned, or to decay. But before all things, they shall chiefly declare their good will towards the viewers of the pouertie, them they shall greatly reuerence, them they shall assiste in euery difficultie, they shall mayntayne their estimation by all the meanes they may. And suche as by obloquie, or any other meanes, do endeuour to hinder this new decree, they shall sharpely reprooue, and if they see cause, seuerely punyshe them by fyne, or otherwyse.

To be briefe, they shall pretermit none of all those thinges, whereby they may

openly make it knowne, that this whole businesse pleaseth them well, and that they desire with al their heart, that euery member of the common wealth, but especially the poore might be prouided for.

As many as are of the Ecclesiasticall ministerie, shall first acknowledge, that it chéefly appertayneth vnto them to further this cause, sithe once that care did wholly lye vppon the Churches. Therefore they shall reuerence all the Stewardes, as worthy office fellowes, and with holy and deuoute exhortations shall encourage them to procéede in that trauell, so acceptable to almightie God. Moreouer, they shall often commende this worke in their sacred Sermons, otherwhiles they shall make whole orations vnto the people of almes and relæuing the poore: as we sée after the Prophets and Apostles, Chrysostome, Gregorie Nazianzene, and other holy fathers haue done, out of whose writings they may gather plentifull matter to speake of. Furthermore it shall not grœue them, rather than this worthy ordinaunce shoulde vtterly decay, to graunte parte of their Churche goods, and if necessitie

ſtie required, the veſſels of golde or ſil-
uer, the ſacred veſtures and other orna-
mentes of the churche, to be conuerted to
the vſe of the poore.

The ſtuards, & generally all, to whom
the charge of the pouertie is committed,
ſhall wiſely determine, neuer to be wea-
rie of well doing, or to be diſcoraged with
any encomberances which may happen.
Let them conſider often and attentiuely
the dignitie of their office, which is great-
ly prayſed euermore in the holy Scriptu-
res. Let them account, that the naturall
and ſupernaturall gyftes, wherwith God
hathe endued them, were beſtowed on
them for this ende, that they ſhoulde em-
ploy them to the glorie of God in helping
the poore, and excepte they doe it with a
good will, that they ſhall once render an
accompte vnto GOD. In the meane
tyme, let them not doubte of the liberall
rewarde whiche God hathe prepared for
them, though men be neuer ſo ingrate.
Moreouer let them perſuade thẽſelues, ẏ
ſo many men do daily pray vnto God our
heauenly father for their ſafetie, as there
are pouertie that receyue almes at theyr

hands. Wherfore let them contemne the slaunders of wicked whisperers, & let thé onlye haue respecte to the honest iudgements of good and Godly men touching them. To conclude, let them make their reckning, that nothing so horrible or formidable can happen, that oughte iustlye to withdrawe them from their studye to benefite the poore. As long as they please God, and (as farre forth as they may) deuout men, all is well.

The Cittizens, especially they of the welthier sorte, shall to their power further this institution, and shall declare, not in worde only, but also in deede, that they greatly approue it. They shall willingly heare the exhortations to liberalitie which are often made in the Churche by the ministers of the word, and shall often call the same to minde. They shall giue of their goods without grudging, according to an equalitie. They shall vtter by all meanes possible, their benevolence towarde the Stuardes. For these muste nædes bee reuerenced of all men, as hauyng deserued a farre greater rewarde. Fynally, lette euery Cittizen in all matters

ters, vse the pouertie with humanitie and courtesye.

The pouertie also them selues, whyche are relæued by the common Almes, muste bée contente with that estate which GOD hathe lotted vnto them: yea let them thanke God, who hath vouchedsafe to moue the heartes of godly menne to studie earnestlye for theyr publique relæfe, and to endeuoure to practise that whiche they thoughte expediente for the same.

But let none desire at any time to receyue, whiche haue not næde in dæde, then these small thinges whiche are giuen with a cherefull mynde let them receyue also with a cherefull mynde, and wythoute grudging, alwayes iudging that to be inough and sufficiente, whiche is sufficiente to sustayne nature. For a spare and sober supper, is yet a supper: and the poore mans parsimonye or frugalitie is muche more healthfull, than the riche mans excesses.

Moreouer, lette them comforte one another, and encourage one another to modestye, sobrietye, and taciturnitie.

The

The ryche mens myndes are not lyghtly moze excited to liberalitie by any thing than with the ſighte of the frugalitie and modeſt ciuilitie of the powre.

To conclude, all honeſte men of euery degree, and ſuche as deſyre as well the glozie of GOD, as the publike vtilitie, lette them altogither often conſider thoſe reaſons, whiche are expreſſed by vs in the beginning in the two firſte chapters. I doubt not but that when thoſe reaſons ſhall be wayed of all men, but eſpecially of thoſe whyche excell other in dignitie and authozitie, with ſuche diligence and iudgemente, as is requiſite, then all men wyll wyllingly and cheerefully apply their counſell and trauayle, to retayne and conſerue the ozder of releuing the powre, once alredy wel begun. The which yf it may euer cõſtantly be done, I beſeech God our heauenly father to inſpire in all places the chiefeſt and wozthieſt men, his electe, with his holye ſpirite, which may informe and prepare them plẽtifully to al duties of charitie.

FINIS.

Imprinted at London by F. Coldocke,
and H. Bynneman.

1572.